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THE QUEEN

**A BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE GUIDE
TO HER LIFE AND TIMES**

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to queen**

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the coronation

**The monarch
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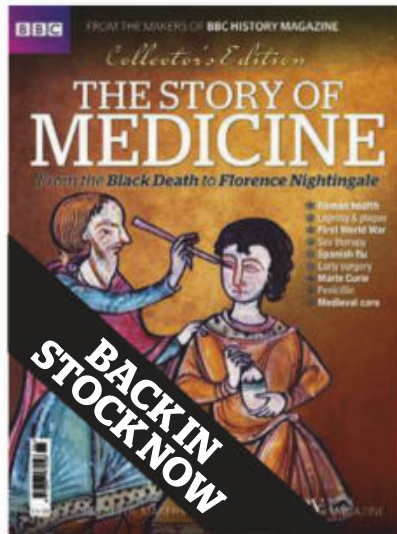
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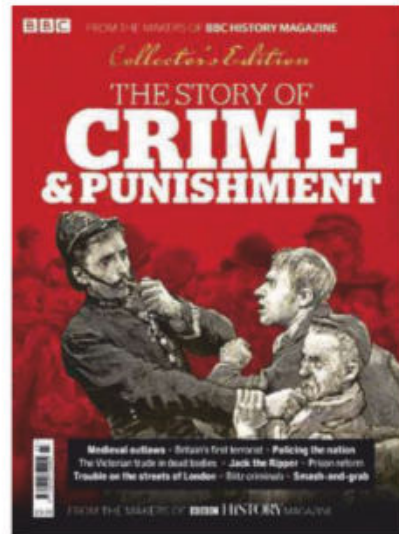
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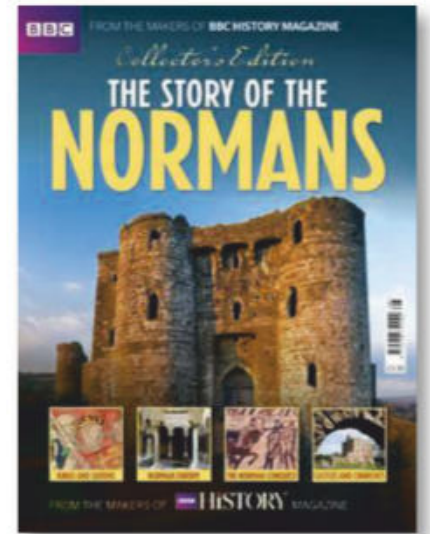
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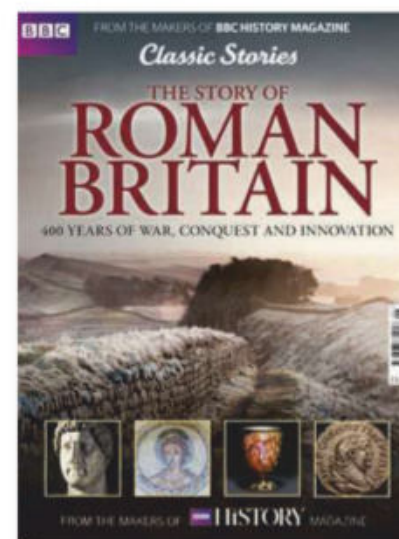
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THE QUEEN

**A BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE GUIDE
TO HER LIFE AND TIMES**

WELCOME



When Elizabeth II was born in April 1926, Stanley Baldwin was prime minister, the General Strike was a few weeks away and the scars of the First World War were strongly evident in British society. Since then, Britain has experienced tremendous changes, but one thing has remained constant – the Queen, our longest-reigned and longest-lived monarch.

In this collector's edition, we've compiled and updated a number of articles that have appeared in *BBC History Magazine* and *The Queen*, a special edition published in 2016. We've also included several new articles, written specially for this edition.

You'll discover the Queen's journey from a young princess with no expectations of the crown, through her wartime service, marriage and family, to her recent jubilee triumphs. At the same time, we chart some of the transformations that have occurred in the country and the world at large. On some occasions, the Queen has been an important component of these historical events, such as the growth of the Commonwealth, whose story is chronicled in these pages.

I hope that you enjoy reading this special edition and don't forget to check out regular issues of *BBC History Magazine* where we will continue to explore the history of the 20th century in depth.

Charlotte Hodgman, Editor

FROM THE MAKERS OF **BBC** **HiSTORY** MAGAZINE

CONTENTS

- 6** **Timeline: The Queen**
Victoria Arbiter outlines the key milestones in the monarch's extraordinary life
-

THE MAKING OF A QUEEN

- 12** **Young Elizabeth**
Kate Williams charts the early years and upbringing of a princess who never expected to be queen
- 22** **The royal marriage**
Sarah Gristwood examines the Queen's partnership with Prince Philip, the longest marriage in British royal history
- 30** **The coronation: becoming queen**
Hugh Costello looks behind the scenes of the 1953 coronation, a moment of colour and glamour in dreary postwar Britain
- 34** **Inside Buckingham Palace**
Dickie Arbiter takes us from the 18th-century origins of the Queen's home up to insights into the royal household today
-

LIFE AS QUEEN

- 42** **The love behind the throne**
Victoria Arbiter looks at the balance of family life with the ceaseless demands of duty for Elizabeth as a working mother
- 50** **Glorious royal residences**
Buckingham Palace is her official London residence, but the Queen has several other palatial homes to visit
- 56** **The monarch and her ministers**
From Winston Churchill to David Cameron, Francis Beckett analyses the Queen's relationship with 12 former prime ministers

- 64** **Dressing to impress**
We take a look at the Queen's wardrobe to see how royal fashion has evolved during Elizabeth's decades on the throne

- 68** **The Queen and the Commonwealth**
Ashley Jackson considers Elizabeth II's role as head of the Commonwealth and as a force for international change

- 76** **Elizabeth II on tour**
We reflect on some of the many official visits of the Queen's globe-trotting reign
-

THE QUEEN & HER LEGACY

- 86** **Royal jubilees**
Stephen Bates looks at what the Queen's jubilees tell us about British views on the monarchy
- 92** **Secrets of a sovereign's success**
Andrzej Olechnowicz reflects on the factors that have secured the Queen such a successful reign
- 94** **Queen on screen**
Mark Glancy examines three films that successfully fictionalise periods in the Queen's life
- 98** ***The Crown* sensation**
Ted Powell looks at the period drama about Elizabeth II that has fascinated audiences
- 100** **A lifetime of change**
Dominic Sandbrook shows how the Queen has lived through one of the most remarkable chapters of social transformation in British history
- 108** **The changing face of the monarchy**
Stephen Bates discusses how the modernisation of the royal family under Elizabeth II has helped to sustain its popularity



The Queen

VICTORIA ARBITER chronicles the key moments in Elizabeth II's extraordinary life



The new princess, born third in line to the throne

1926

HRH Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary of York is delivered by Caesarean section at 2.40am on 21 April at No 17 Bruton Street, Mayfair, home of her maternal grandparents. It is perhaps an inauspicious start given she is the **only monarch ever to be born at a residential address with a street number.**



Elizabeth delivers her first radio address, in 1940

1939

Following **the declaration of war**, Lord Hailsham suggests Elizabeth and her sister Margaret be evacuated to the relative safety of Canada. Their mother famously replies: "The children could not go without me, I could not possibly leave the king, and the king would never go." **The young princesses spend most of the war at Windsor Castle.**

1947

On her **first overseas tour**, Elizabeth joins her parents on a visit to South Africa and Rhodesia. It is from here that she delivers her **21st birthday radio address** to the Commonwealth saying, "I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service."

1925

1945

1936-37

Following the abdication of her uncle, Edward VIII, after a reign of only 325 days, **her father assumes the burden of sovereignty.** He chooses the regnal name George in an effort to boost public confidence in the monarchy. Princess Elizabeth becomes the first female heir presumptive to witness the crowning of her parents.



Elizabeth, aged 11, at her father's coronation on 12 May 1937



Wartime duties as an ATS driver and mechanic

1945

Keen to make a contribution to the war effort, Elizabeth persistently campaigns for permission to register for service. Initially it is refused on the grounds of personal safety. When her father finally concedes, **she joins the Women's Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS)**, volunteering as a driver and mechanic.



His grandfather's letters patent endowed princely status upon Charles

1948

On 14 November, **Prince Charles Philip Arthur George is born** at Buckingham Palace. George VI grants children of Elizabeth and Philip the title prince or princess. Princess Anne will follow two years later, with Prince Andrew (1960) and Prince Edward (1964) completing the family.

1952

King George VI dies in his sleep at Sandringham on 6 February, aged 56. Elizabeth and Philip are 4,000 miles away in Kenya, on the first stop of a tour to Australia and New Zealand. When the news is confirmed, Elizabeth is asked what regnal name she will assume. She responds: "My own name of course – what else?" On 7 February, **the couple arrive home to a nation in mourning.**



Elizabeth and Philip spent six months travelling the Commonwealth

1953-54

The Queen and Philip embark on a **six-month tour of the Commonwealth**. Encompassing 12 countries, it is the most ambitious royal tour ever undertaken. Leaving their two young children at home with their nannies, the couple travel to five continents, covering 43,618 miles by land, air and sea.

1950

1955

1947

On 20 November **Princess Elizabeth marries Lt Philip Mountbatten** at Westminster Abbey. The occasion, officiated by the archbishop of Canterbury, is broadcast to a global audience of 200 million radio listeners. With postwar austerity measures still in place, Elizabeth collects ration coupons to purchase the material necessary to make her wedding dress, designed by Norman Hartnell.

The wedding gave many Britons a sense of optimism

1951

Having been diagnosed with cancer, **George VI's left lung is removed**. To allow him time to convalesce, Elizabeth and Philip travel in his place on a **visit to Canada and the USA**. On 7 October they fly across the Atlantic for the first time, a journey that takes over 16 hours.

1953

As dawn breaks on Coronation Day, 2 June, so does news that a British expedition has succeeded in being the first to set foot on the world's highest summit, Everest. **The Queen is crowned at Westminster Abbey**. As the arch-

bishop of Canterbury places St Edward's Crown upon her head, the crowd chants, "God Save the Queen". Going against the advice of her ministers, Elizabeth agrees to televise the event. **Around 27 million Britons tune in.**



Elizabeth wearing the St Edward's Crown at her coronation. It was made in 1661 for Charles II



Charles and Diana acquiesce to the crowd's demands for a balcony kiss

1969

Cameras are permitted behind palace walls for the first time in ***Royal Family***, a fly-on-the-wall documentary revealing the off-duty Queen. It is watched by two-thirds of the nation, a week before the televised investiture of Prince Charles as the Prince of Wales. The palace later withdraws it from public view, and the film remains off-limits.

1981

Watched by an estimated global television audience of 750 million, **Prince Charles marries Lady Diana Spencer** at St Paul's Cathedral on 29 July. The couple step onto the palace balcony to greet the assembled masses below, who are chanting: "Kiss her". The newlyweds oblige, offering the day's defining moment and inadvertently setting a new tradition.



Appraising the devastation in Windsor Castle after the fire

1992

After the divorce of one child and the separation of two others, a fire at Windsor Castle and the publication of Andrew Morton's explosive tell-all: *Diana: Her True Story*, **the Queen declares 1992 her 'annus horribilis'**. The same year it is announced that **she will begin to pay income tax**.

1980



On walkabout among the crowds during 1977's jubilee festivities

1977

Beginning in Glasgow, **the Queen marks her silver jubilee** by embarking on a three-month tour of the UK, visiting 36 counties (the first monarch to traverse so much of the country in so short a time). Meanwhile, punk band the Sex Pistols release the **controversial single 'God Save the Queen'**.

1995

1982

Diana, Princess of Wales, gives birth to her first child within a year of her marriage to Charles. With his father present, **Prince William Arthur Philip Louis is born** at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington on 21 June. Though not the first royal to be born in a hospital, he is the first direct heir to be born outside the home.

1997

The **death of Diana** on 31 August in a Paris car crash, aged 36, rocks the nation and the world. The Queen is heavily criticised for staying at Balmoral with her grieving grandsons instead of returning to London. **Public hostility escalates** over the lack of a Union flag flying at half-mast over Buckingham Palace. On the day of the princess's funeral, the Queen concedes and the flag is raised to half-mast.



Charles and Diana in happier times, following the birth of Prince William



2002

Sorrow overshadows the early months of the Queen's golden jubilee year with the **deaths of her sister and mother** just six weeks apart. An estimated 200,000 people queue to pay their respects to the Queen Mother (above) as she lies in state. In early June, **jubilee celebrations** stretch out over a four-day weekend, including the Prom at the Palace concert.



Wedding bells for Prince Harry

2018

Prince Harry marries American actor Meghan Markle at St George's Chapel, Windsor on 19 May. Meghan, a divorcee of mixed race heritage, becomes the first Duchess of Sussex. The first and only former Duke of Sussex, George III's sixth son, campaigned for the abolition of slavery. In October the couple announce they're expecting their first child come spring 2019. ■

2012

History is assured on 6 February when Elizabeth joins her great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria in becoming **one of only two British sovereigns to celebrate a diamond jubilee**.

2015

Already the longest-lived British monarch and the world's oldest serving sovereign, at 5.30pm on 9 September **the Queen breaks Queen Victoria's record** as the longest-reigning monarch in British history.

2010

2011

Prince William marries Catherine Middleton at Westminster Abbey on 29 April. In May, Elizabeth, the most widely travelled monarch in history (having visited 116 nations), is finally able to **visit the Republic of Ireland**. It is the first by a British sovereign since the bloody struggle for Irish independence during the reign of her grandfather, George V, who visited in 1911.

Prince William's wedding to 'commoner' Catherine Middleton



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2015

2013

HRH Prince George Alexander Louis of Cambridge, the first child of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, is born at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington on 22 July. Third in line to the throne, he is also the Queen's third great-grandchild. **He may well be the first monarch of the 22nd century**.

2017

Prince Philip retires from public engagements in August but remains associated with more than 780 organisations (he is perhaps best known for founding The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme in 1956). In November he and the Queen celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary – he is the longest serving British consort.

The Duke, as Captain General of the Royal Marines, at his final royal engagement



THE MAK OF A QUEEN

THE JOURNEY TO THE THRONE OF A PRINCESS
WHO NEVER EXPECTED TO BE QUEEN



ING EN

DAUGHTER AND HEIR

Princess Elizabeth with George VI.
When her father came to the throne in 1936 after his brother's unexpected abdication, Elizabeth was schooled for her new role as heir to the throne

+ The early years of a princess

YOUNG ELIZABETH

+ Philip, the Queen's partner in

THE ROYAL MARRIAGE

+ Elizabeth becomes Queen

THE CORONATION

+ Inside the royal household

BUCKINGHAM PALACE





PRINCESS

ELIZABETH *before she was Queen*

From her birth to loving parents, her unconventional education and her involvement in the war effort, to the crisis that brought her to the throne, **KATE WILLIAMS** charts the early years and upbringing of a princess who never expected to be queen

IN SERVICE

A 1942 Cecil Beaton portrait of the 16-year-old princess as colonel of the Grenadier Guards

OPPOSITE PAGE:

The carefree, animal-loving princess at 7, three years before the abdication crisis



THIRD IN LINE The royal family gather following the christening of the new princess in Buckingham Palace's private chapel, 29 May 1926. Although third in line, Elizabeth was not expected to reign



LONGED-FOR LILIBET A seven-month-old Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary with the Duchess of York; the duke wrote that the baby "make[s] our happiness complete"



PRINCESSES AT PLAY

Atop a rocking horse with sister Margaret in August 1932

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In April 1926, Britain was on the brink of the General Strike called by the TUC. There had been an economic perfect storm: the postwar crash in coal prices, combined with the government putting Britain on the gold standard, had put mining under pressure. After a government commission recommended reducing miners' wages, the stage was set for an all-out strike of miners and other workers covered by the TUC, including railway and transport workers.

But despite being in a crisis, the home secretary Sir William Joynson Hicks could not be excused witnessing the legitimacy of a royal baby. The Duke and Duchess of York – George V's second son, Bertie and his wife, the former Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon – were expecting their first child. Although the baby was not a direct heir to the throne, Sir William still had to travel to 17 Bruton Street in Mayfair, a home owned by Bowes-Lyons, where the child was due to be born.

The little girl was born by Caesarian section at 2.40am on 21 April. "We have long wanted a child to make our happiness complete," wrote the duke. The child was "a little darling with a lovely complexion", decreed Queen Mary. "I do hope that you and papa are as delighted as we are to have a granddaughter, or would you sooner have had another grandson?" wrote the duke to his father, George V. The baby was officially third in line to the throne, but since she was the child of George V's second son – and female – she was destined to be pushed down the succession by sons born to her uncle, the Prince of Wales, and her father. She was called Elizabeth Alexandra Mary after her mother, great-grandmother and grandmother – after consorts, not queens regnant. The princess was destined for a good marriage and little more.

On 3 May, the TUC called the General Strike. Conservative prime minister Stanley Baldwin called it the "road to anarchy", but the government played hard, drafting in volunteers and calling forth the middle classes to step in. By 12 May it had been called off and the

following year the government outlawed sympathetic strikes and strikes intended to coerce the government, making another general strike impossible and restoring the existing structures of power. Two weeks later, Elizabeth Alexandra Mary was christened by the archbishop of York at Buckingham Palace.

The young princess was a favourite with her grandparents and one of the few people in the family not afraid of the king, whom she called 'Grandpa England'. In early 1927, her parents departed on a tour of Australia and New Zealand, leaving her with her nannies. When they returned, they took a new house, 145 Piccadilly, near Hyde Park. It had 25 bedrooms, a lift and a ballroom but, by royal standards, Elizabeth was growing up in a cosy, normal house and her playmates in the gardens were the daughters of businessmen and doctors, not fellow princesses.

In 1930 Princess Margaret was born. This time the home secretary, John R Clynes, had to trek up to Glamis Castle, the ancestral home of the Duchess of York. "I am glad to say that she has large blue eyes and a will of iron, which is all the equipment a lady needs!" the duchess wrote. As they grew up, it became evident that the two little girls had very different personalities. Elizabeth was conscientious, dutiful and orderly – she couldn't go to sleep without unsaddling and feeding all her nursery horses and lining them up neatly. Margaret was playful, determined and fond of pranks – she blamed any mistakes or spillages on her imaginary friend, Cousin Halifax.

In 1933, when Elizabeth was seven, she received a new governess, Miss Marion Crawford. She had been recommended to the Duchess of York as a "country girl who was a good teacher, except when it came to mathematics". Fortunately, the duchess was not looking for a challenging academic schedule. Both she and her husband had hated school (the duke had been ridiculed as a dunce). What the royal couple wanted for their daughters was a "really happy →

Elizabeth was conscientious, dutiful and orderly – she couldn't sleep without unsaddling and feeding her nursery horses and lining them up neatly

childhood, with lots of pleasant memories”, which meant minimal lessons. The king had only one request: “Teach Margaret and Lilibet a decent hand”. Miss Crawford’s regimen was gentle. Elizabeth received lessons from 9.30 until 11 in the morning and the rest of the day was devoted to outdoor games, dancing and singing, with a rest period for an hour and a half.



Nanny Marion Crawford gave the girls a minimal education. Lessons became more robust once Elizabeth was heir

Unlike her parents, Elizabeth had an aptitude for learning and enjoyed history and literature but she had little opportunity for sustained study. Queen Mary criticised their education and recalled that she had busied herself with homework in the holidays – but to no avail. In her free time, Elizabeth was fondest of dogs and horses. She declared she wanted to marry a farmer so she could have lots of “cows, horses and dogs”.

George V died in January 1936 and the Prince of Wales assumed the throne as Edward VIII. As king he was more dependent on his lover, Wallis Simpson, than ever. But although the foreign press discussed his relationship with the American divorcee at length, the British newspapers stayed quiet. In late October, Wallis filed for divorce from her second husband and it was clear that the king meant to marry her. The government was as determined to stop him, for it was thought the people would not accept a divorced consort. The empire governments mostly refused the idea outright. “It was plain to everyone that there was a great shadow over the house,” wrote Miss Crawford.

On 10 December, 10-year-old Elizabeth was about to write up her notes from her swimming lesson when she heard chants of “God Save the King” outside. She asked a footman what had happened and he told her that her uncle had abdicated and her father was king. She ran up to tell her sister the news. “Does that mean you will have to be the next queen?” asked Margaret. “Yes, some day,” replied Elizabeth. “Poor you,” said Margaret. In the face of crisis and change, Elizabeth adopted a technique she would use throughout her life: she stuck to her routine, attempting to appear unruffled. She wrote up her swimming notes, and at the top of the page she wrote: “Abdication Day”.

The jolly life of 145 Piccadilly was at an end. The family moved into Buckingham Palace and her father

and mother, who had always been so present, became consumed by meetings, receptions and politics. The former king, now the Duke of Windsor, the Uncle David of whom the children had been so fond, was sent to Europe. Elizabeth attended her father’s coronation, accompanied by Queen Mary, writing that the abbey was covered in “a sort of haze of wonder as papa was crowned, at least I thought so”.

Elizabeth was now heir to the throne. Queen Mary stepped up her campaign over education, and more history was introduced. In 1938, Elizabeth began receiving lessons from the vice provost of Eton, Henry Marten, on constitutional history. Marten’s teachings were important to Elizabeth’s perception of her role: he told her that monarchy was strengthened by adaptability and talked of the importance of broadcasting directly to her subjects.

The palace and the government were concerned that the princess did not seem too isolated. The First Buckingham Girl Guide Pack was instituted, with 20 girls invited to the palace on Wednesday afternoons. They learned trekking in the palace grounds and practised signalling in the corridors.

On 15 March 1939, German tanks entered Prague. The ‘peace’ created through appeasement by prime minister Neville Chamberlain was shattered. “Who can hope to appease a boa constrictor,” declared *The Telegraph*. The country moved towards war. In the summer of 1939, Elizabeth and her parents paid a visit to the Royal Naval College in Dartmouth, where the king had studied. There she was introduced to Philip of Greece, 18 to her 13. The princess was fascinated by him.

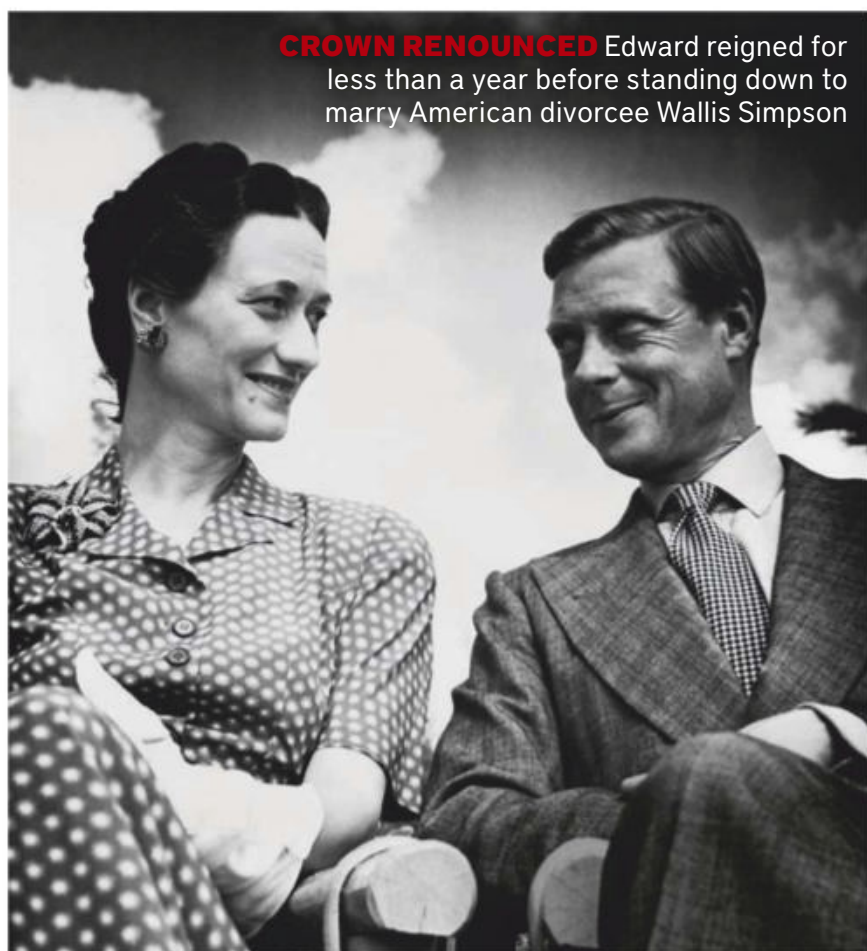
On 3 September 1939, Chamberlain announced on the BBC that Britain was now at war. The king broadcast later in the day, telling the people that this “grave hour” was “perhaps the most fateful in our history”. The princesses were staying at Birkhall, near Balmoral, on their annual summer holiday with Miss Crawford – and were soon joined by hundreds of evacuees from Glasgow. After Christmas at Sandringham, they went to Royal Lodge in Windsor, the pale pink walls painted green to fool enemy bombers. The queen refused to bow to pressure to send the children to Canada, out of the range of the enemy.

In spring 1940, German troops invaded Denmark and Norway. Chamberlain resigned and Winston Churchill

FUTURE QUEEN Princess Elizabeth, aged 11, witnesses her father the Duke of York being crowned King George VI after his brother Edward VIII's abdication in 1936



CROWN RENOUNCED Edward reigned for less than a year before standing down to marry American divorcee Wallis Simpson



PALACE PALS A girl guide pack was created at the palace to enable Elizabeth to fraternise with girls her own age

GETTY IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK-AP



Now Elizabeth was heir to the throne she began receiving lessons on constitutional history



PRACTICAL PRINCESS The king relented in 1945 and allowed Elizabeth to play a part in the war effort – she joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service where she learned car mechanics

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became prime minister, declaring to the Commons that Britain must “wage war, by sea, land and air with all our might”. The dispossessed royals of Norway and Denmark arrived seeking safety in London. The princesses were sent to Windsor Castle, where they would remain for the rest of the war – along with the crown jewels, bundled up in paper in the underground vaults.

The princesses were key to the propaganda strategy – the nation was told that they were in a secret location in the countryside, where they carried around their gas masks and grew their own carrots and potatoes in a vegetable patch. But the princesses were not exempt from the terrors of war – 300 bombs were dropped on Windsor Great Park over the course of the conflict. Often they were woken at night and sent into the underground vaults of the castle. Like Churchill, they slept in ‘siren suits’, zip-up all-in-one jumpsuits designed for warmth and practicality in bombing raids.

The palace had repeatedly rejected requests for Elizabeth to speak on the radio. In 1940, with the Luftwaffe razing British cities to the ground, the king and queen changed their minds. In a time when US support for the war effort was critical, they agreed to allow the princess to broadcast on the BBC to the children of North America. On 13 October she gave her speech, expressing how she and her sister sympathised with those who had been evacuated, since “we know from experience what it means to be away from those we love most of all”. The speech was a hit. “Princess yesterday huge success here,” reported a north American representative of the BBC.

“This time we are all in the front line,” said the king in his Christmas message at the end of 1940. The bombing of British cities continued until April. Britain entered a sustained period of hardship. In 1941 it was the first country in the world to introduce conscription for single

women. When Elizabeth turned 16, she begged her father to allow her to join the Labour Exchange. She was interviewed, but not placed – much to the relief of the king, who wished to protect his daughters.

At the end of 1943, when Elizabeth was 17, Philip came to spend Christmas with the family. He was charmed by her admiration and what he described as the “simple pleasure” of family life, so unlike his own unhappy childhood. He returned to war enthusiastic about the idea of marrying the princess, and his cousin, George of Greece, made a suggestion to the king that the pair might wed. It was a misstep; the king was shocked and told George that Elizabeth was too young and Philip “had better not think any more about it at present”. The king didn’t wish to lose his daughter and the courtiers thought Philip “rough, ill mannered” (in the words of one). Worst of all was his background. As one courtier put it, “it was all bound up in one word: German”.

The princess turned 18 in 1944 and began to assume royal duties. Her father insisted she be made a counsellor of state (usually only open to those who had reached 21) and she stood in for him when he was briefly in Italy, signing a reprieve on a murder case. She made her first public speech at a children’s hospital and launched HMS *Vanguard* in the autumn. But she wanted more – she desired to serve in the forces. In early 1945, the king relented and allowed her to join the Auxiliary Territorial Service as a trainee ambulance driver. At the base in Aldershot she was initially kept away from the other trainees and taken to eat in the officers’ mess, before the papers found out and the regime was quickly adjusted. The princess later said that it was the only time in her life that she had been able to test herself against people her own age. For the government, her training was a propaganda coup. Photos were taken of her wielding her spanner or standing by vehicles and she was on the front of every Allied newspaper.

On 30 April, Allied forces occupied the Reichstag. Hitler committed suicide in his bunker and the troops →

For the government, her training was a propaganda coup. Photos were taken of her wielding her spanner and she was on the front of every Allied newspaper



VICTORY IN EUROPE
The princess, in her ATS uniform, joins her family on the balcony to greet the crowds celebrating VE Day

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surrendered. On 7 May, the BBC interrupted a piano recital to announce that the following day would be known as Victory in Europe Day. The war was over.

On VE Day, the princesses appeared with their parents and Winston Churchill on the balcony of the palace to wave at the crowds, Elizabeth in uniform. That evening, Margaret suggested that they go out to see the crowds. The king and queen relented and the girls set off, accompanied by Marion Crawford and various officers, wandering as far as Park Lane before returning back through Green Park to shout “we want the king!” with the crowds. “All of us were swept along by tides of happiness and relief,” recalled Elizabeth.

Once the euphoria had subsided, the aftermath of war seemed grey, miserable and full of privations. “Food, fuel and clothes are the main topics of conversation,” wrote the king. He was exhausted by the effort of war and found it hard to adjust to daily life. At the same time, the people were fascinated by the princess and increasingly preferred to see her opening hospitals, presenting prizes and giving

speeches. She was overwhelmingly popular: dignified, a veteran of the war and full of the glamour of youth. Cambridge University suggested she might be the first woman ever to receive an honorary degree but the palace refused the offer.

In 1946, with the end of the war in Japan, Prince Philip returned to Britain and was sent to teach naval officers in Wales. He began to court Elizabeth in earnest, taking supper with her and Margaret in the nursery and taking the sisters out to restaurants or shows. Austerity Britain was delighted by the idea of a royal romance and the possibility of a wedding. The king and queen were dubious, but it was too late – Elizabeth was determined to marry Philip.

In February 1947, the princess left the country for the first time for a tour to South Africa with her parents and sister. There, she celebrated her 21st birthday. She reviewed troops, attended a ball in her honour and gave her address to the empire. In it she pledged her future: “I declare before you that my whole life, whether it shall be long or short, shall be devoted to your service”. She had spent a long time in the nursery but now she was 21, on the brink of marriage – and in less than five years, she would become queen. ■

Elizabeth was overwhelmingly popular: dignified, a veteran of the war and full of the glamour of youth

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INTRODUCTORY OFFER

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Princess Elizabeth and Philip after their engagement was announced. They wed in 1947 and their marriage appears to have remained solid throughout its more than 70-year span

FACING PAGE:

Philip Mountbatten, the handsome young naval lieutenant who Elizabeth married for love





PHILIP

THE LOYAL *royal consort*

As history has shown, being a monarch's husband or wife is beset with pitfalls and sacrifices. Yet the Queen's partner, Prince Philip, has navigated the challenges to be her stalwart companion for more than seven decades.

SARAH GRISTWOOD traces their life together

The recent years of Elizabeth's reign have witnessed several quiet revolutions: the rise to prominence of a new generation, with some unexpected new members, and an increased awareness of Prince Charles as his mother's natural successor.

But perhaps the most surprising is this – a fresh appreciation of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Prickly and sometimes problematic, yes, but one half of the partnership that has triumphed over not only the ups and downs common to any couple, but the fluctuating fortunes of the British monarchy.

This is the longest marriage in British royal history, and Prince Philip has, said the Queen in her Golden Wedding speech in 1997, “quite simply, been my strength and stay all these years”. A partnership that has entered its eighth decade, a feat for any couple, has not been without its difficulties. Philip in particular has long been seen as an almost curmudgeonly figure with his famous gaffes, his brusqueness with the press, and as an unfashionably military and upright figure pacing two steps behind Her Majesty. But he should go down as one of the makers of modern monarchy and it should perhaps be remembered that the young Princess Elizabeth chose, for love, a man who at the time seemed something of an outsider to the British royal family.

Of course, he too was royal – like his wife, a great-great-grandchild of Queen Victoria. But his grandfather King George of Greece had been assassinated; his uncle King Constantine deposed; and his father Prince Andrew exiled along with most of the family. His parents' marriage did not survive the strain of exile. Initially settling in Paris, Philip's father moved to Monte Carlo, while his mother was placed in a mental institution, suffering from what the conventions of the day described as a nervous breakdown. Philip was sent to school in Britain and raised there in the care of his mother's Mountbatten family (anglicised from its German form, Battenberg, in the First World War).

He and Princess Elizabeth had met, on family occasions, when Elizabeth was a child. In 1939 the 13-year-old princess accompanied her parents to the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth, where 18-year-old cadet Philip, tall and blond, helping to entertain the royal party. The two exchanged letters and in 1943, invited to spend Christmas with the Royal Family at Windsor, he watched a zestful 17-year-old Elizabeth sing and dance through the

annual family pantomime, after which the young people turned on the gramophone, and danced till 1am. It may (suggested the princess's governess Crawfie) have been then that Elizabeth's real interest in Philip began.

Only a few months later the prominent diarist Henry ‘Chips’ Channon recorded his belief that “a marriage may well be arranged one day” between the pair. Any ‘arranging’ behind the scenes was being done by Philip's ambitious uncle Lord Mountbatten, who had early promoted the match. (Philip himself had at one point felt the need to tell his Uncle Dickie to step back, and allow him to do his own courting.) But on Elizabeth's side, no arrangement was necessary.

Philip had an impressive war record, seeing active service and being mentioned in dispatches. By the time he was invited to Balmoral in the summer of 1946, it was clear Elizabeth was in love. She accepted his proposal that August, although the king's consent had still to be obtained. George VI had doubts about his daughter's youth and Philip's raffish reputation. There was concern over public reaction to Philip's German relations, so soon after the First World War. Courtiers complained he was ‘no gentleman’: the impoverished Philip, after all, was still like ‘a dog without a basket’ arriving for weekend visits without spare clothes, and writing ‘of no fixed abode’ when it came to signing his name in visitors' books.

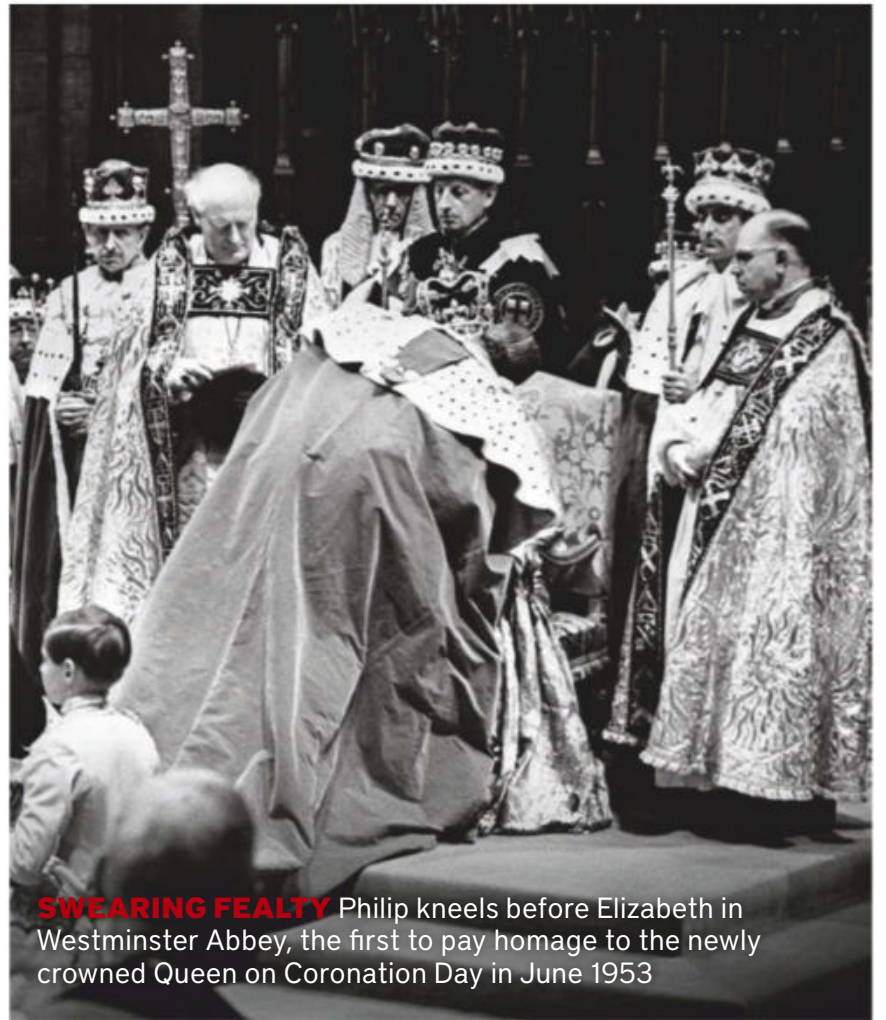
The princess's parents asked her to wait some months, and took her away on the lengthy South Africa tour that saw her broadcast her famous 21st-birthday speech. But on 10 July 1947 the announcement was posted from Buckingham Palace that “with the greatest pleasure” the King and Queen announced the betrothal of their dearly beloved daughter to Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten, RN (Royal Navy). He had renounced his nationality, his name, and his Greek Orthodox religion. Other sacrifices would come along the way.

Philip, Elizabeth wrote to her mother from honeymoon, “is terribly independent and I quite understand the poor darling wanting to start off properly, without everything being done for us”. Philip himself wrote that: “My ambition is to weld the two of us into a new combined existence that will not only be able to withstand the shocks directed at us but will also have a positive existence for the good”. Today, the words sound almost like a prophecy.

The ‘shocks’ came comparatively quickly. The early years of the marriage saw what, in retrospect, must have looked like an extended honeymoon. Philip seemed set for a high-flying naval career and when he was posted to Malta Princess Elizabeth, as still she was, could accom-



DAYS IN THE SUN In the early years of marriage, before her accession, Elizabeth was able to live the relatively normal life of a naval wife in Malta where Philip had been posted



SWEARING FEALTY Philip kneels before Elizabeth in Westminster Abbey, the first to pay homage to the newly crowned Queen on Coronation Day in June 1953

pany him, relishing the comparatively private life of a navy wife. But all too soon, George VI's failing health led to Philip's giving up his work.

The young couple were in Kenya, on safari at Treetops lodge, when in February 1952 came news of the king's early death, and Elizabeth's sudden accession to the throne. It fell to Philip to break the news to her, but the shock for him was almost as severe.

Before his wife became Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Philip said, whatever they did was done together, and "I suppose I naturally filled the principal position". Now, he once said to author Gyles Brandreth, "I was told to keep out of the way, and I did". As Elizabeth battled to get to grips with her new responsibilities, Philip (unlike Prince Albert in Victoria's day) would not be privy to the red boxes of state papers sent to her; nor would he be present at the weekly audiences with her prime ministers.

A king's wife, of course, would never have expected necessarily to play any part in matters of state, but for a man of Philip's generation and temperament, it was

intensely humiliating to be excluded so completely. Behind the scenes, however, it was Prince Philip who understood that in a postwar world, the new monarchy had to sell themselves differently to their nation. It was he, reported some contemporary newspapers, who backed the move to permit television cameras inside Westminster Abbey on Coronation Day, 2 June 1953.

Prince Philip rode to the abbey beside Elizabeth in the Gold State Coach, but there could be no question of his processing with her through the abbey. He was, instead, the first of the temporal lords to swear allegiance. On his knee, his hands between hers, he had instead to swear fealty, touch the Crown, and kiss his wife's left cheek. "I, Philip, do become your liege man of life and limb, and of earthly worship; and faith and truth I will bear unto you, to live

George VI had doubts about Philip's raffish reputation...
Philip was still like 'a dog without a basket'
arriving for weekend visits without spare clothes

The royal wedding

Elizabeth married for love and wanted to be “as happy as my father and mother have been”

ALL CHANGE

Wedding day, 1947. Philip had to renounce his nationality, his name and his Greek Orthodoxy in order to marry Elizabeth

OPPOSITE PAGE:

The royal wedding was a bright moment in a country suffering under postwar austerity

BELOW: A *Picture Post* royal wedding special issue, November 1947



When on 20 November 1947, Princess Elizabeth married Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten, there were qualms about whether a large public ceremony was appropriate. Should it not be held quietly, at Windsor? The country, after all, was still in the grip of wartime rationing. But though some MPs did complain about the cost, Winston Churchill declared it would be “a flash of colour on the hard road we have to travel” – and it was clear the public felt the same way.

Huge crowds came to see the wedding presents on display at St James’s Palace, such as the sapphire and diamond set from the king, who also gave Purdey guns. Eleanor Roosevelt, more practically, sent towels and kitchen cloths, and President and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek a dinner service of Chinese porcelain. Gandhi sent a cloth made from yarn spun on his own wheel; Elizabeth’s grandmother Queen Mary took it for one of his loincloths, and exclaimed at the indelicacy. A woman in Brooklyn sent a turkey, because, she said “they have nothing to eat in England”. Many members of the public sent nylon stockings, still a rationed luxury.

Norman Hartnell, designing the wedding outfit, had to ask his manager to sleep in the workroom to thwart press desperate to steal a glimpse. The dress, inspired by Botticelli’s paintings, was a festival of flowers, with the blooms picked out in crystal and pearls. Like the wedding itself, it promised rebirth and growth after six cold years of war.

At the dance in Buckingham Palace two nights before the wedding, King George led a conga through the state apartments. It was the first time Europe’s extended royal family had been able to assemble since before the Second World War. The groom’s stag night, among his fellow naval officers, took place at the Dorchester Hotel.

There were some last minute mishaps on the wedding morning itself. No-one could find the bride’s bouquet and it was discovered that the double strand of pearls she had planned to wear, a gift from her parents, was still at St James’s Palace on public display. But the bouquet was traced to a cool room, where it had been placed to keep fresh, and the Princess’s private secretary leapt into a hastily-commandeered car to retrieve the necklace in the nick of time.





The day dawned cold and clammy, but crowds as much as 50 deep watched as the bride and her father drove to Westminster Abbey in the Irish State Coach, escorted by the Household Cavalry. It was, again, a welcome return to the world of pomp and pageantry, the first time the cavalry's full ceremonial uniform and plumed helmets had been seen since prewar days.

But the Archbishop of York, officiating alongside the Archbishop of Canterbury, said that the wedding was "in all essentials exactly the same as it would have been for any cottager who might be married this afternoon in some small country church". Perhaps the only controversy was postwar tensions that meant Philip's three surviving sisters, married to German princes, were not invited to the ceremony.

The bride promised to obey, and the couple left the Abbey to the strains of Mendelssohn's 'Wedding March'. At the wedding breakfast, an 'austerity' event for a mere 150 guests, Filets de Sole Mountbatten was followed by a casserole of unrationed partridges and Bombe Glacee Princesse Elizabeth.

King George VI said: "Our daughter is marrying the man she loves". Prince Philip, newly naturalised as a British subject and created a Royal Highness, said he was "proud of my country and my wife". Elizabeth said "I ask nothing more than that Philip and I shall be as happy as my father and mother have been, and Queen Mary and King George before them".

Huge audiences around the world watched film and newsreel footage. In occupied Berlin, a 4,000-seater cinema was full day after day. Every film, every article, described this as a fairy story. But, more importantly, it would prove also to be the start of the royal family's most enduring love story.

and die, against all manner of folks". He kept his word, but there was and would continue to be debate about his precise titles and place in the royal pecking order. The role of a male consort had been a problematic one since the time of the Tudor queens, and one immediate controversy related specifically to Philip's masculine identity.

With the couple already the parents of two, Prince Charles and Princess Anne, the question of a surname arose. Philip's uncle, unwisely, was heard boasting that the House of Mountbatten now sat on the throne. Instead the decision was taken that the Queen and those of her descendants in the immediate line of succession should keep the name of Windsor. Philip reportedly complained that he was "just a bloody amoeba" – valued for his reproductive function, and no more.

When, in autumn 1956 Prince Philip (with his wife's blessing) set out on a four month solo tour of the Commonwealth, it was against a background of gleeful press speculation about his regular attendance at the all-male Thursday Club, an informal lunch gathering that was held in a restaurant in Soho. The Queen's press secretary was forced to issue a statement: "It is quite untrue that there is any rift between the Queen and the Duke". Stories of Philip finding balm for his wounded pride in flirtations with other women would continue, but they would never threaten the fundamental solidity of the relationship, any more than his sometimes abrupt manner in private with his wife.

The Queen's own way of easing a difficult position was to defer to her husband in their domestic life. He became, unusually, the more hands-on parent to their children while Elizabeth settled into the position of, arguably, the world's number one career woman. His decisions may not always have been happy – it was Philip who sent Prince Charles to Gordonstoun, whose bracing atmosphere had suited Philip himself but which Charles found desperately uncongenial – but perhaps his parenting style, like that of his wife, has changed with the changing times. He was playing squash while Elizabeth gave birth to their first child, but in the room (at her request) and holding her hand as she gave birth to their fourth. The Queen for her part took a conscious decision when the couple's 'second family' came along – Andrew in 1960 and Edward in →

DIVISION OF LABOUR

Philip had his own varied interests but once said he kept out of the way in Elizabeth's official business as Queen, while she is said to defer to him in family matters



WELL TRAVELLED The Queen and the Duke aboard the royal yacht in 1972. Philip has accompanied Elizabeth on most Commonwealth tours and visits overseas and in the UK



TOUR OF DUTY Britain's oldest ever spouse of a serving monarch has been the Queen's companion at thousands of events

ALAMY/GETTY IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES-LICHTFIELD ARCHIVE

1964 – to insist on being able to spend more time with them.

Together Elizabeth and Philip have enjoyed or endured more than 70 years of state visits, ceremonies and charitable initiatives. But years, also, of summers spent at Balmoral and Christmases at Sandringham, of voyages on the royal yacht *Britannia* which, until she was decommissioned in 1997 was perhaps the couple's most personal home. On picnics at Balmoral he was the one manning the barbecue while the Queen, famously, did the washing up. On official tours Philip, ironically, in view of his own tetchy reputation, would in the early days of her reign have to urge his wife to smile more and be more forthcoming.



Largely retired from public engagements, the Duke is still associated with hundreds of organisations

and bad, and a mounting tally of grandchildren and indeed great-grandchildren.

“I, and his whole family, and this and many other countries, owe him a debt greater than he would ever claim, or we shall ever know,” said the Queen of Philip the next day. That was more than 20 years ago now, and in that time the marriage has only become more impor-

tant not only for the partners themselves

but for the monarchy as the Queen, still carrying out a formidable list of duties, has seen the other supporters of her youth – her mother, sister, friends – slip away.

Looking back on the occasion of their Golden Wedding anniversary in 1997, speaking at the Guildhall the day before his wife made her own laudatory speech, Prince Philip remarked that when you are busy, time seems to fly – and that to he and his wife the last 50 years had indeed seemed busy. Prince Philip had been president or honorary member of some 850 organisations, more even than are sponsored by the Queen, as well as managing the family's estates.

“It's been a challenge for us, but by trial and experience I believe we have achieved a sensible division of labour and a good balance between our individual and joint interests,” Prince Philip declared. Perhaps it is as much as any couple could say. Those ‘joint interests’, of course, include not only a shared commitment to ensuring the future of the monarchy, but family milestones both good

Both partners have surely come to terms with the anomalies of their positions, but, in their nineties, there are inevitably fresh concerns. The Duke of Edinburgh is almost five years older than his wife, and has seen some health problems. Hospitalised during the celebrations of his wife's Golden Jubilee, a car crash in early 2019 only served to highlight his vulnerability. Despite getting back behind the wheel almost the next day, in February the prince decided to stop driving altogether.

Two years ago Prince Philip announced his decision to step back from public life. The Queen too is now delegating some of her responsibilities, but her sense of duty keeps her still in the public eye. And for as long as she remains there, she must fervently hope that Prince Philip too will still be available and working behind the scenes – supporting, advising – the aspect of his work we never see. This is after all the partnership that has helped keep the British monarchy flying into the 21st century. ■

On picnics at Balmoral he was the one manning
the barbecue while the Queen, famously,
did the washing up

It poured with rain, but it was still a moment of colour, glamour and optimism watched by millions in a dreary postwar Britain.

HUGH COSTELLO talks to the makers of a BBC documentary that went behind the scenes of the 1953 coronation



THE CORO *Becoming Queen*



REGAL RIDE

Elizabeth emerges from Westminster Abbey to enter the gold coach first used for the state opening of parliament by George III in 1762

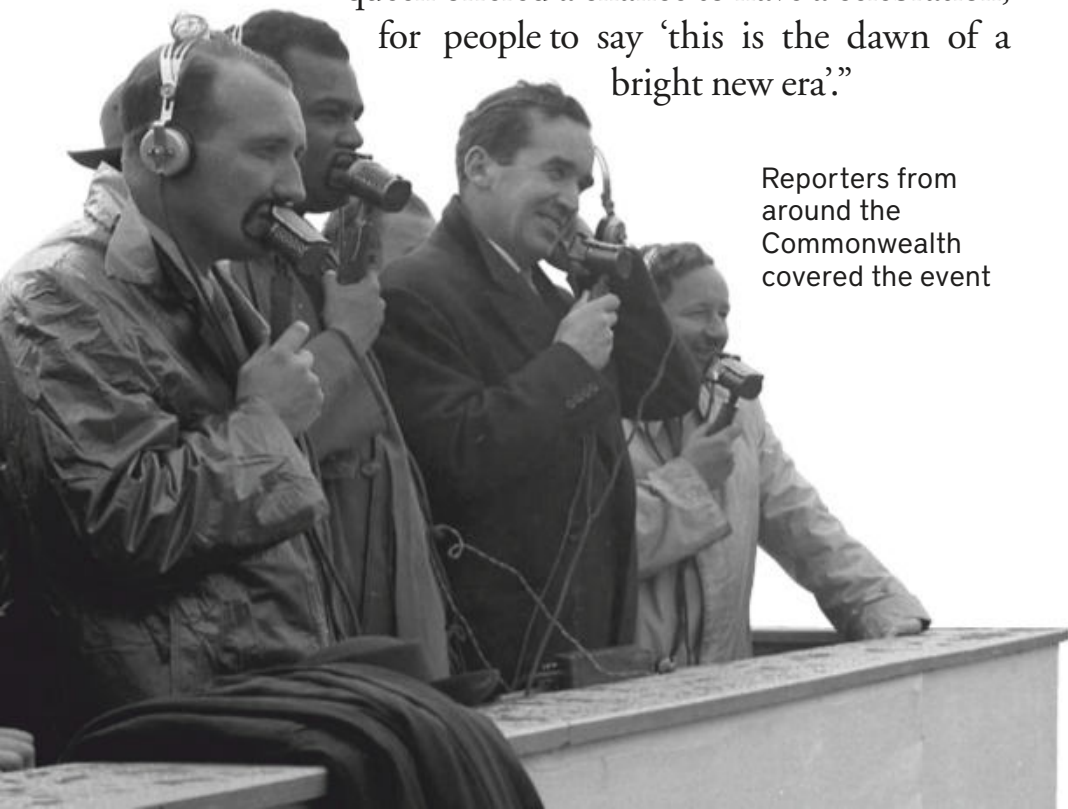
NATION

The durability of Britain's current monarch – for Elizabeth II has reigned longer than any other – means that only those now nudging their 70s (or beyond) can recall her coronation. Yet many people too young to have any personal connection to the events of June 1953 share a kind of folk memory. We have all seen the grainy images of the young, female monarch, a symbol of modernity and postwar progress. There is a widespread feeling that, for all the pomp and ritual, her accession marked a definitive break with the past in the UK. In historical terms, 1953 seems like only yesterday. The 1950s was the decade in which much that is now familiar first entered the national consciousness: rock 'n' roll was born and teenagers invented, austerity gave way to consumerism. In short, it was a time very much like our own.

Yet as a BBC Timewatch film *Crowning a Queen* showed, that is deceptive. The coronation took place before many of the seismic shifts in British society had been felt. “The film gives us a snapshot of a country that is white, Christian and deferential,” says the then Timewatch editor John Farren. “In many ways, it’s a completely different country from the one we live in now.”

Farren's interest in the royal events of 1953 was sparked by an earlier Timewatch film. “When we did *The Greatest Storm*, about the floods that killed hundreds of people [in January 1953], we realised that a sea change had happened in that year. It seems that was why the storm had been more or less obliterated from our memories. People had had enough bad news, enough austerity. This was the beginning of the end of drab postwar life. A new, young queen offered a chance to have a celebration, for people to say ‘this is the dawn of a bright new era.’”

Reporters from around the Commonwealth covered the event



Farren and his team embarked on a search for eyewitness testimony. The idea, he says, was to “turn the usual programme-making approach on its head” by building a film around the stories told by those who remembered the day. Many people contacted the team with vividly remembered vignettes.

“A lot of people recall driving to London and camping out overnight,” says Farren. “The day itself was the wettest June day in living memory, which tends to stick in people’s minds. One family remember that after it was all over they couldn’t find their car. Another thing nearly everyone recalls is Hillary and Tenzing conquering Everest.” News of that triumph appeared in the papers the same morning and became another cause for national celebration.

Typical of those personal recollections, says James Hayes, the film’s producer, is that of the Langleys, a couple from near Watford who were born around the same time as the Queen and got married in the same year. “In 1953 they were ordinary working-class people who slept overnight in the rain and waited for 20 hours just to see the carriage passing. Mrs Langley had very much aligned her life with that of the Queen. They had both married sailors, though in the Queen’s case it was an officer. And they had both been in the Girl Guides.”

As well as focusing on stories from the crowd, the producers created an *Upstairs, Downstairs* picture of the event itself. “We try to give a sense of what was happening backstage, the minutiae of how all of this was planned down to the very last detail,” says Hayes. One recurring theme is evidence that, behind the display of splendour, the country was still broke. “Wellington Barracks [where Trooping the Colours begins] had had a paint job, but only on the facade – inside it was falling to pieces,” says Hayes. “Nobody had anything. It had been six years of war followed by eight years of deprivation, and this was everybody’s first opportunity to put colour back into their lives again.”

It was also an opportunity to demonstrate the centrality of the Commonwealth in everyday life. Empire may have been on the wane, but Britain had not yet been forced to confront the reality that it was no longer a world power (that painful realisation would come three years later with the Suez crisis). Writing in *BBC History Magazine* on the coronation’s 50th anniversary, historian Wendy Webster noted that “the Commonwealth was not

ROADSIDE FAITHFUL

Crowds camped out to get a good view of the procession, at a time that Britain was “white, Christian and deferential”



only seen as youthful by comparison with Britain as ‘the old country’, but also provided an idea of Britain as a moral and mature nation, willing to make the transition from empire to a multi-racial community of equal nations”. Symbolic of that community was the larger-than-life Queen Salote of Tonga, who became something of a celebrity following her scene-stealing appearance at Westminster Abbey.

Perhaps the single biggest reason for the 1953 coronation’s lasting impact on the British psyche is that it marked the birth of television as a mass medium. In their book *A Social History of the Media*, Asa Briggs and Peter Burke record that, while just over two million TV licences had been issued by that time, more than 20 million people

watched the broadcast. James Hayes: “People gathered around the first and only TV in their village, sets with tiny screens but huge aerials that flapped when aircraft went by. We found one story of a woman who’d polished all her furniture as if the Queen was actually coming into the room.”

Yet getting the event on air was not easy. Far from recognising the PR benefits of television, the palace was terrified that the ceremony would lose its magic and become vulgar. “It was a battle that lasted six months”, says Hayes. “Many newspapers took the BBC’s side and argued that it should be a people’s coronation. But the resistance was there. It’s easy to forget now, but this was still an age of deference and privilege.” ■

A new, young queen offered a chance to have a celebration, to say “this is the dawn of a bright new era”

Inside BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Former royal press secretary
DICKIE ARBITER takes us through the history
of the Queen's London home, from its
18th-century origins to his own behind-the-
scenes insights into the modern royal household

THE QUEEN'S HQ

The iconic landmark has 775 rooms, including 19 state rooms, 92 offices, 240 bedrooms and 78 bathrooms. More than 800 staff are based there and upwards of 50,000 official guests attending various functions pass through its doors each year



London is full of old buildings dating back hundreds of years, so you would be forgiven for thinking Buckingham Palace is one of them. Of the occupied royal buildings, in fact Windsor Castle is the oldest, having been originally established by William the Conqueror in the 11th century. St James's Palace is next oldest, established by Henry VIII in the 16th century, followed by Kensington Palace, developed by William III and II and Mary II in the 17th century. The concept of Buckingham Palace dates back only as far as George IV in the 19th century.

The palace's origins, however, can be traced back to the English poet and Tory politician John Sheffield, the 1st Duke of Buckingham and Normanby, who in 1703 built himself a home and called it Buckingham House. It passed to his son Edmund, the 2nd Duke, in 1721 and to his half-brother, Charles Herbert Sheffield, the 1st Baronet of Normanby, in 1735. George III bought the house in 1761 for his new wife Queen Charlotte (and later their children), when it became known as 'the Queen's House' (not to be confused with the house of the same name in Greenwich).

By the end of the 18th century, there had been a great debate about building a new royal palace, but the plan was abandoned when George III's son, George IV (reigned 1820–30) came to the throne. Having felt very much at home in the Queen's House, he decided to transform it into his palace and put his architect John Nash in charge.

Nash was already well known to George IV, having developed the area from St James's and Regent Street to Regent's Park and the surrounding streets. Nash's plan for Buckingham House was to extend the central block north, south and west and add two wings to ultimately make the building into the shape of a U, with a triumphal arch in the forecourt in celebration of the British military victories at Trafalgar in 1805 and Waterloo in 1815.

Nash's palace was considered a masterpiece, albeit an expensive one, with costs by 1828 having soared to £496,000 (around £24.5m in today's money). On

George IV's death in 1830, the prime minister, the Duke of Wellington, fired Nash and appointed Edward Blore to finish the job. Because parts of the palace were still unfurnished, the king's brother the Duke of Clarence, who succeeded him as William IV (reigned 1830–37), chose to remain at his home at Clarence House. Under Blore, the state rooms were finished and furnished with some of the finest works of art from Carlton House, George IV's home when he had been Prince of Wales.

Victoria, who succeeded her uncle William IV, was the first monarch to take up residence in Buckingham Palace. Nine months after marrying her first cousin Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha in February 1840, her first child was born. Three more children followed in fairly quick succession and by 1845 Victoria complained to prime minister Robert Peel about the lack of family and entertaining space.

Edward Blore was instructed to draw up plans and created a fourth wing, the East Front, thereby closing off Nash's forecourt, with the triumphal or 'Marble Arch', as it was known, being moved stone by stone to the north-east corner of Hyde Park (where it still stands). Under architect James Pennethorne, the Ball Room and Ball Supper Room were added in 1852. Brighton Pavilion was sold in 1850 for £53,000 (approximately £3.1m in today's money) and the proceeds were used to pay for the works. Edward VII (reigned 1901–10) had all the lighting, heating and ventilation improved, as well as redecorating all the rooms.

The last major works to the palace were carried out under George V (reigned 1910–36). Blore's 1850 East Front, created with soft Caen stone, had deteriorated from London's pollution and was replaced in 1913 by Sir Aston Webb with Portland stone. All was pre-cut to size and the front refaced in 13 weeks.

During the Second World War, Buckingham Palace was bombed on several occasions. The most significant damage was to the private chapel which was rebuilt, following a suggestion by the Duke of Edinburgh, into an

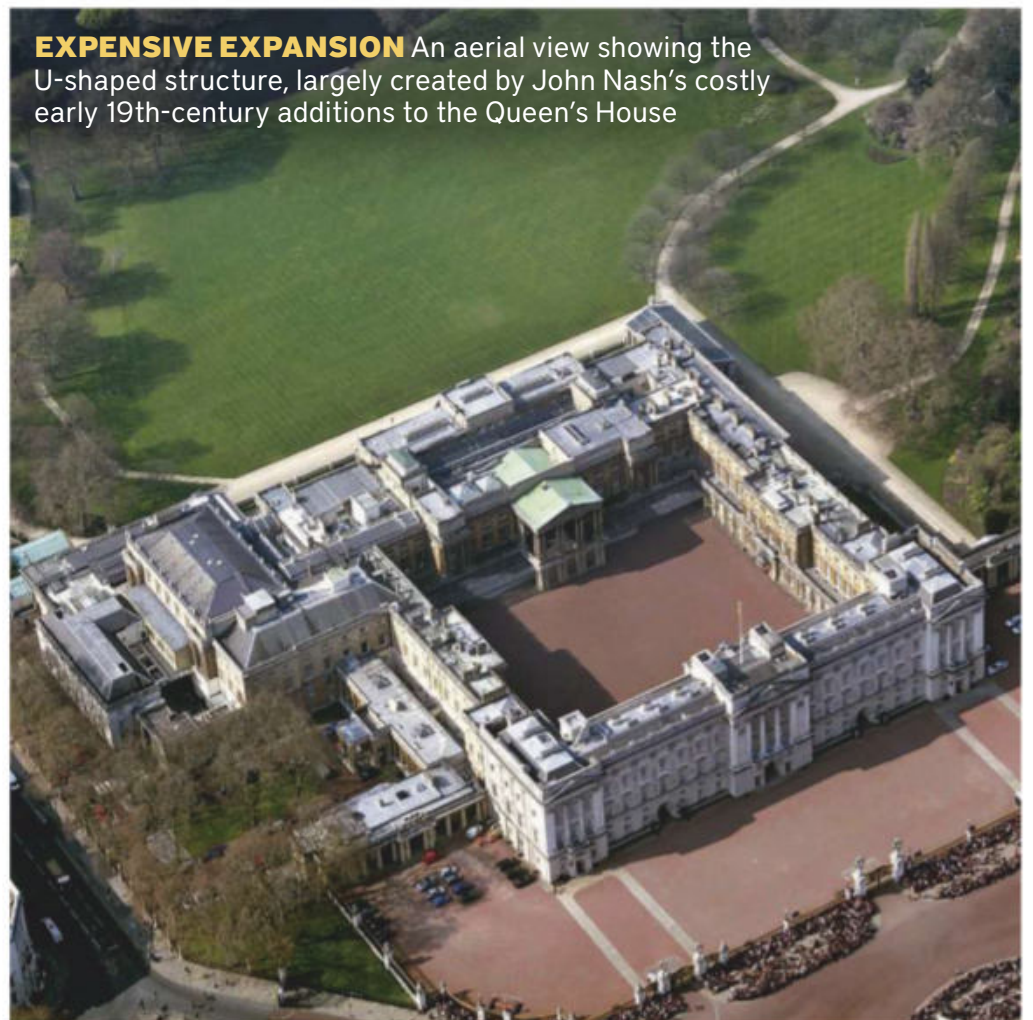
The palace's origins can be traced back to
the 1st Duke of Buckingham in 1703



PRIVATE HOME A painting from c1705 depicting the recently built Buckingham House, the country home of Tory politician John Sheffield



ROYAL TIES John Sheffield (1648-1721), 1st Duke of Buckingham and Normanby, who had the original house built in 1703



EXPENSIVE EXPANSION An aerial view showing the U-shaped structure, largely created by John Nash's costly early 19th-century additions to the Queen's House

exhibition space for the Queen's works of art. It opened in 1962 as the Queen's Gallery and was expanded in 2002 – it is now open daily.

Buckingham Palace is probably one of the most recognisable buildings in the world and comes with the tag of the headquarters of the British monarchy. While it serves as the official residence of the Queen, it can hardly be called a home in the true sense – although all of her children were raised there, decamping from time to time to the other royal residences at Windsor Castle, Sandringham House, the Palace of Holyrood House and Balmoral Castle. The Queen only spends 3–5 days of her working week at the palace, with the rest of her time at one or other royal residence. Prince Andrew, Prince Edward and Princess Anne all have their offices in the palace and, while they all have their own private homes, they still maintain a suite of rooms at the palace in the event of needing to overnight in London.

The Queen's work programme is laid out months in advance but the one constant in her day is her official red boxes. These contain state papers from the cabinet and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. There are also papers from the other realm states, as well as private correspondence. She receives on average 300–400 letters a day, a selection of which will find their way into her red boxes. She gets these boxes at least twice a day and every day, except for Easter Sunday and Christmas Day, and she reads everything that's put in front of her. She receives a large number of formal and informal visitors to the palace. She holds investitures for recipients who have been awarded an honour through either the New Year's or Birthday Honours Lists. She holds receptions in the state rooms, private lunches for people from all walks of life, and she holds three garden parties a year.

She receives members of the privy councils, ambassadors and high commissioners, as well as bishops, senior military officers and civil servants.

The Queen's week at the palace is dependent on the

number of engagements and audiences. Now in her tenth decade, the numbers of official engagements have been reduced and are now more evenly spread out, while the paperwork is still relentless. One meeting she will not miss though is her weekly briefing from her prime minister, always once a week when both are in London and always just the two of them, with no note-takers.

In 1,000 years of history, the monarchy has evolved. Recently there have been frequent calls by the media and politicians for the monarchy to change, and it does and it has – although it would prefer to call it adapting to meet the needs of today. However, some things do not change.

On seeing the Queen for the first time, in any one day, men will bow from the neck and women curtsy, referring to her at the start of a conversation as Your Majesty and thereafter Ma'am.

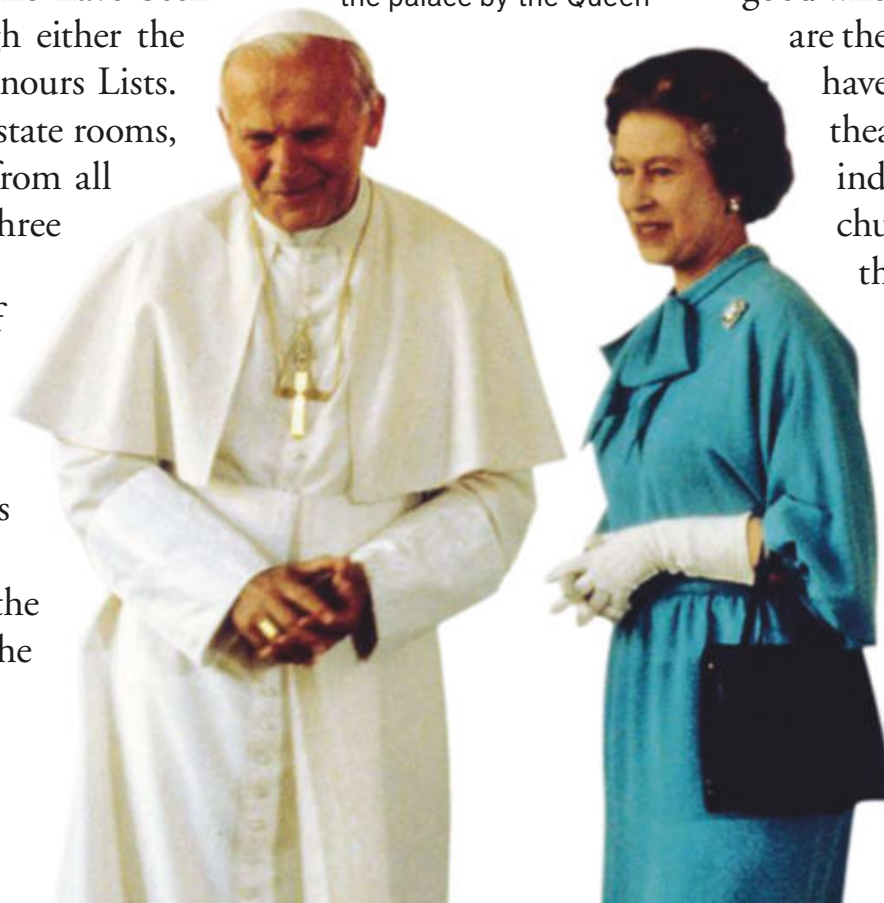
Investitures are run in the time-honoured way with each recipient, if it's a civilian, receiving 25 seconds of quality chat with the Queen, and the military get 20 seconds. Prince Charles and Prince William tend to take slightly longer.

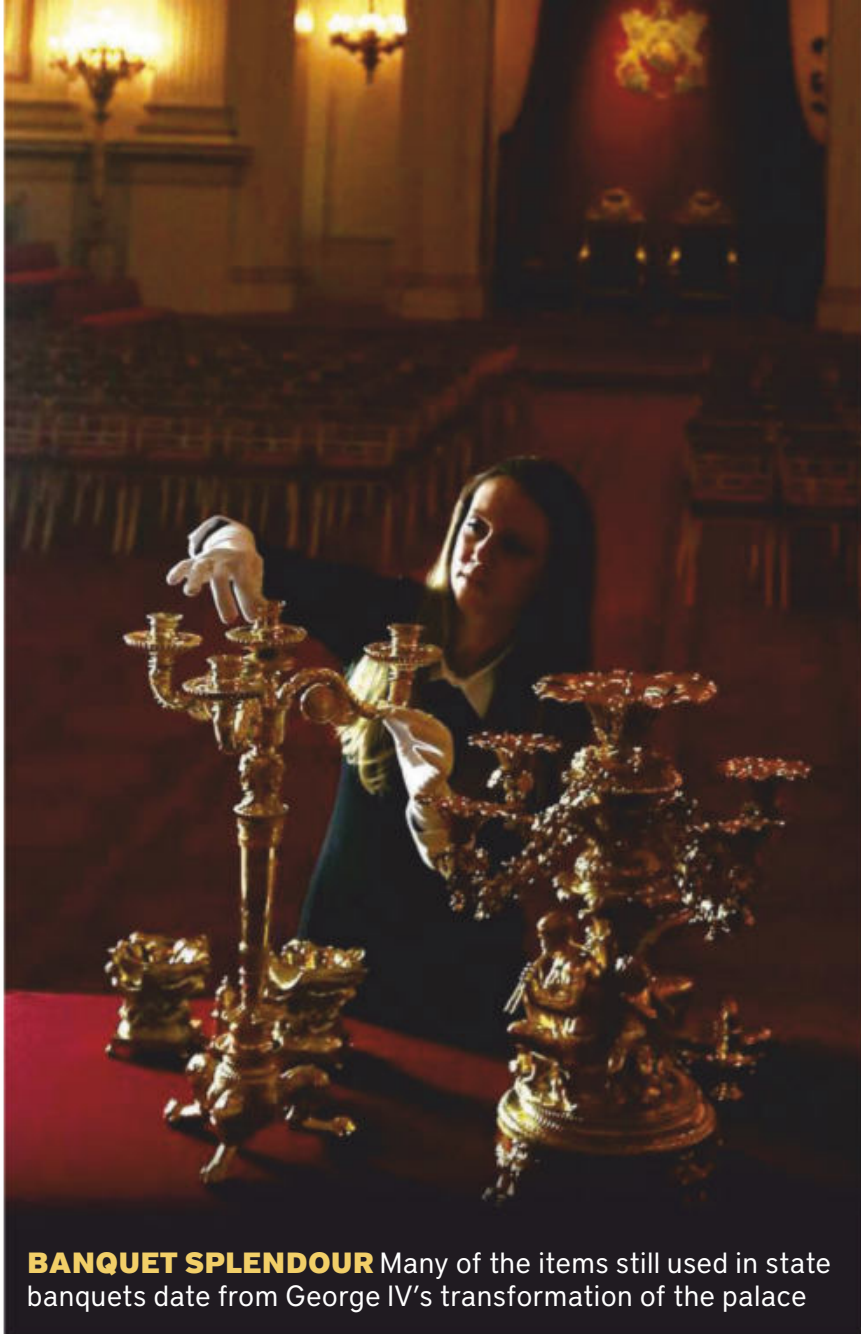
Garden parties are to a set format. Around 8,000 guests from all walks of life are invited. The dress code is very simple. Men should wear a morning suit or lounge suit and tie and the ladies a dress or suitable trouser suit. Hats and gloves are no longer de rigueur.

Receptions, on the other hand, have undergone a significant change. Where once it was only the great and the good who were invited, today's receptions are themed. Over the years the themes have varied and have included the theatre, the arts, politicians, industry, sport, medical, the church and the Commonwealth – the list is endless.

There have been numerous big moments at Buckingham Palace: the coronation (1953), silver (1977), golden (2002) and diamond jubilees (2012); the marriages of three of the Queen's children, Princess Anne (1973), Prince Charles

Pope John Paul II (the first reigning pope to visit the UK, in 1982) is among hundreds of dignitaries to have been hosted at the palace by the Queen





BANQUET SPLENDOUR Many of the items still used in state banquets date from George IV's transformation of the palace



PAPER WORK The Queen receives 300–400 letters daily, some of which reach the dispatch boxes she reads through twice a day

(1981) and Prince Andrew (1986), and of her grandson Prince William (2011). She has entertained presidents, kings, queens, emperors and the first ever visit to the UK by a pope.

The flying of the Royal Standard at Buckingham Palace indicates that the Queen is in residence. From 1837 until 1997 no other flag had flown from the flag pole – until, that is, the death of Diana Princess of Wales, when the non-flag became an issue. At the time, the Queen was at Balmoral and the flagpole was bare, while all around the country the Union flag was being flown at half-mast. The flag issue was finally resolved on the day of the funeral when the Union flag was raised and dropped to half-mast. From that day on, a flag is always flown from the palace roof.

GETTY IMAGES

The monarchy and the palace have always adapted to modern needs. Following the fire at Windsor Castle in 1992, and recognising the need to fund its restoration, Buckingham Palace was opened to visitors in 1993 and,

together with the new visitor admission structure at Windsor, raised £25.5m or 70 per cent of the £36.5m cost of the restoration. Buckingham Palace has remained open to visitors during August and September and is now firmly on the tourist 'must visit' list, with a little under half a million visiting the State Rooms in 2018. In 1997, in keeping with switching over to computerisation, the Queen launched the royal.uk website and today the palace uses all forms of social media – email, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram – and has its own channel on YouTube.

Buckingham Palace has been to the Queen her official residence, place of work and office since the death of her father, George VI, in 1952. It's not a building one can fall in love with easily, mainly because of its size and its purpose. True, the Queen will have many fond memories, as perhaps do other members of her immediate family, but one has to remember it has never been a real home from home in the true sense, but always 'the office'. ■

It's not a building one can fall in love with easily, mainly because of its size and its purpose... it has never been a real home from home



LIFE AS Q

A WAY OF LIFE: HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES
OF ELIZABETH'S 65 YEARS ON THE THRONE

+ THE LOVE BEHIND THE THRONE

The monarch's life-work balance

+ GLORIOUS ROYAL RESIDENCES

The Queen's country homes

+ MONARCH AND MINISTERS

13 prime ministers and counting

+ DRESSING TO IMPRESS

The Queen's working wardrobe

+ THE COMMONWEALTH

Elizabeth II's supra-national role

+ ELIZABETH ON TOUR

Highlights of a globe-trotting reign

QUEEN

A LIFE LIVED ON SHOW

The Queen in Tasmania during a Commonwealth tour. Between November 1953 and May 1954, she visited 13 countries in the West Indies, Australasia, Asia, and Africa

GETTY IMAGES





Family

THE LOVE BEHIND *the THRONE*

Her devotion to her country is unquestionable, but it has often meant compromises for the Queen as a wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. **VICTORIA ARBITER** looks at the struggles the sovereign has faced to balance a family life with the ceaseless demands of duty

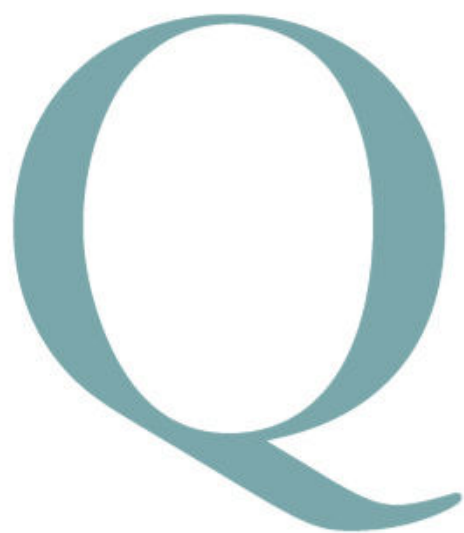
PRIDE AND JOY

A beaming Elizabeth with the newly christened Princess Anne, Prince Philip and Prince Charles, aged nearly two, October 1950

OPPOSITE PAGE:

The baby Prince Edward with his 14-year-old sister, Princess Anne





Queen Victoria hated babies. Though she had nine of her own, she despised being pregnant, viewed breastfeeding with disgust and found her offspring “ugly” and “frog-like”. Maternal she was not. Fortunately, attitudes towards royal children have changed dramatically since then.

Following Prince Charles’s christening, the then Princess Elizabeth wrote to a friend, saying of her son: “Don’t you think he is quite adorable? I still can’t believe he is really mine.” Gone is the belief that children should be seen and not heard, and with each new generation modern philosophies have been embraced. The Duchess of Cambridge, now a mother of three, does carry out royal duties yet seems to be given the time and space to focus a lot of her attention on her young family. Given the nature of her position as the wife of the second in line to the throne, the duchess’s good fortune is in stark contrast to that of the Queen’s early years of motherhood, when reminders of her eventual destiny were ever-present. As a result, Elizabeth seems to be keen for William and Catherine to be afforded a quiet family existence, free of the strains of royal life – an opportunity both she and Diana were denied.

June 2019 marks 66 years since Queen Elizabeth II took her coronation oath amid the hallowed halls of Westminster Abbey, pledging to serve both God and the people. As head of the world’s most famous family, her commitment to service and duty has been much applauded, but what many fail to consider is the personal cost that comes from holding the highest position in the land for more than six decades. Though George VI had been ill for many years, his untimely death in February 1952 at the age of 56 threw Elizabeth, then a young mother of two small children, into a life of constitutional duty beholden to a regimented and inflexible royal

calendar. The very nature of her birth has afforded her a life of enormous privilege, but it has also been one in which her personal sacrifices are rarely recognised; the first of many began with the death of her father, a man whom she adored.



Unburdened by the stresses imposed on his older brother (the future Edward VIII) as heir apparent, the Queen’s father, Prince Albert (later King George VI), was an attentive, hands-on father, and he took great delight in the time spent at home with his wife and daughter. In a letter to his mother, Queen Mary, shortly after the princess’s birth in 1926, he wrote: “You don’t know what a tremendous joy it is to Elizabeth and me to have our little girl.” Four years later he and his wife, Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, welcomed a second daughter, the Queen’s only sibling, Princess Margaret Rose, who was born in Scotland in 1930. The royal parents were content to dispense with their nanny in order to oversee bath time and read bedtime stories themselves. According to Marion Crawford – the young princesses’ governess who joined the household in 1933 – mornings always got off to a “raucous” start at 9am when both girls would go to their parents’ bedroom from where shrieks of laughter could be heard. It was a tradition that continued right up until Elizabeth’s wedding day in 1947. The Yorks led an idyllic family life, albeit one lived within the constraints imposed by royal duty. But it was all to change on 11 December 1936 when Edward VIII announced his decision to abdicate after a reign of only 325 days. Now first in line to the throne, and bound by a new set of responsibilities, it was clear that Elizabeth’s childhood would be difficult to emulate for her own family.

In November 1947 Elizabeth married Prince Philip and a year later the couple’s first child, Prince Charles Philip Arthur George, was born. His sister Anne followed in August 1950. Outwardly, the royal family appeared to

What many fail to consider is the personal cost that comes from holding the highest position in the land for more than six decades



WORLDS APART

Elizabeth greets three-year-old Charles after her month-long 1951 tour of Canada. Royal duties would only increase after she took the throne the following year



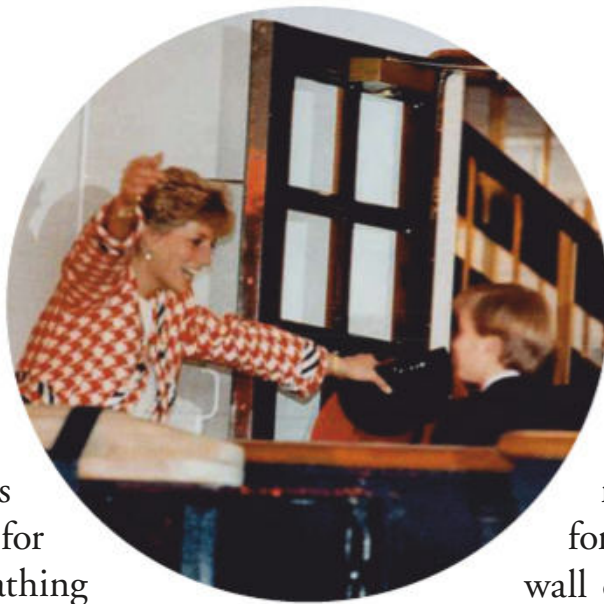
HANDS-ON Charles and Diana were much more public about showing affection for their children, taking young Prince William on their 1983 tour of Australia and New Zealand



FAMILY FIRST The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge appear to be prioritising family life, fitting their royal engagements around their role as parents

GETTY IMAGES/MATT PORTEOUS

be a contented one, but the gruelling royal schedule often led to weeks, even months apart. Laden by constitutional obligation, Elizabeth could rarely spend more than half an hour with her children before her day's engagements, returning in the evening for a brief period of playtime before bathing them and putting them to bed. Charles has spoken of his unhappy childhood, softened by the nurturing relationship he shared with his nanny, Mabel Anderson, who filled the void left by his duty-bound mother. But such were the demands on the newly installed figurehead assuming her reign in what was a largely male-dominated world.



Princess Diana puts protocol aside, running to hug young William and Harry while on a visit to Toronto in 1991

Archive newsreel from 1951 shows a young Prince Charles accompanying his grandmother and aunt to Euston station to greet his parents following their tour to Canada. As Elizabeth steps off the train she warmly embraces her mother before kissing the top of her son's head. He appears to barely recognise her. Jumping forward 40 years, the images are in stark contrast to those of the Prince and Princess of Wales on tour to Canada in 1991. The couple raced up the gangplank to HMY *Britannia* for a joyful reunion with their sons, William and Harry, after a period of separation. Both Charles and Diana threw their arms around the boys in a very public display of affection.

It is unfair, however, to compare across the generational divide. In 1951, Princess Elizabeth was required to maintain the public dignity expected of one in her position. Four decades later, changes in expectation and attitudes to royalty in general resulted in a public delighted to be afforded a glimpse of the loving relationship shared between royal parents and their offspring. By the time Princes Andrew and Edward came along in 1960 and 1964 respectively, the Queen, then firmly established on the international stage and more confident in her

position, was given a second chance at motherhood and she was able to embrace the role more readily, even though her sense of duty remained undiminished. Private home movies recently released, as well as footage shot for the groundbreaking 1969 fly-on-the-wall documentary *Royal Family*, revealed the Queen as she had never been seen before, tickling a baby Prince Charles, flipping through family photo albums with the children and buying them ice-creams in the local village shop. The outward facade may indicate a queen lacking in maternal warmth, but behind palace walls the truth appears to be quite the opposite.

In 1983 the media trumpeted Charles and Diana's "refreshing approach" to royal protocol in taking their then nine-month old son, Prince William, on their six-week tour to Australia and New Zealand. Comparisons between the "detached" Queen who left her children behind during her six-month tour of the Commonwealth in 1953–54, to the new princess who "defied convention" were rampant, but again it is a comparison impossible to justify. Thirty years had passed, during which time advances in aviation made travel significantly speedier. Deference was a thing of the past and, popular as she was, Diana was merely a princess, not the Queen. When William and Catherine embarked on their own tour to Australia and New Zealand in 2014 they too took their young son, Prince George, spending only two nights away from him during the trip.

The Queen's experience within the royal fishbowl, and the lessons learned during the Diana years, have helped inform her approach to family life. Contrary to popular belief, the Queen was always very fond of Diana, and she consistently supported her daughter-in-law. She may not have identified with Diana's touchy-feely approach, but she recognised how successful it was, and that to a new generation Diana was just what the institution needed. As paparazzi interest in Charles's pretty young bride intensified, the Queen went so far as to hold a meeting at →

The facade may indicate a queen lacking in maternal warmth, but the truth is quite the opposite



UNITED FRONT The royal family at the flypast for the RAF centenary in July 2018, including the recently married Harry and Meghan, Duke and Duchess of Sussex. Prince Philip retired from public events in 2017

Buckingham Palace with Fleet Street's newspaper editors in 1981. She implored them to allow Diana some semblance of a private life and to "ease off". The late William Deedes, former editor of *The Daily Telegraph*, later recounted: "I was in a small group with the Queen when she observed: 'It's hard on a girl if she can't go to the local sweet shop without being cornered by photographers.' The then editor of the *News of the World*, Barry Askew, said rather plaintively: 'Why couldn't she send a footman for the sweets?' The Queen replied: 'I think that is the most pompous remark I have ever heard in my life.'" Just two months later, Britain's tabloids printed paparazzi photographs of a visibly pregnant Diana in a bikini while on holiday with Charles in the Bahamas. The palace's plea had fallen on deaf ears.

Induction into the royal firm has been difficult to navigate for all of the Queen's in-laws. Her children's marriages each came about just as 24-hour news stations rolled out, and the royal soap opera of the early nineties

only helped fuel the media's insatiable appetite. Throughout it all, the Queen continued to lead by example as opposed to running a dictatorship. She seems to prefer family members to find their own unique path. In the self-deprecating fashion expected of her, Princess Anne has said of her mother: "As all mothers she has put up with a lot, but we're still on speaking terms so that's no mean achievement."

For the family, she represents a well-respected role model, albeit one with a strong opinion should things go awry. Prince William has said of her: "She's a very good listener. If you do ever have problems, you can share them with her and she'll listen and try to help... but she won't ever tell you what to do. Your successes are your successes, and your failings are your failings." He was quick to add that it's clear when the Queen is displeased. "I've been in her bad books several times," he said in jest. "I've seen how the corgis get told off when they're in trouble... I don't want to go there."

GETTY IMAGES

**"Behind closed doors, she's our grandmother.
It's as simple as that," says Prince Harry**

The Queen has long been a mentor for William, and the two are very close. During his time at Eton he regularly popped over the bridge to Windsor Castle for afternoon tea with his grandmother when she was in residence, and he continues to seek her counsel. Following the announcement of his engagement to Catherine Middleton in 2010, he was handed a guest list with the names of 777 dignitaries, governors and notables, none of whom he knew. He called the Queen and said: “Do we need to be doing this?” After telling him to “bin” the list, she said: “Start with your friends first and then go from there”. But there was one area in which his grandmother ruled. William told royal biographer, Robert Hardman: “I wanted to decide what to wear for the wedding, but I was given a categorical: ‘No, you’ll wear this!’” The outfit in question was the ceremonial uniform of the Irish Guards, of which he had recently been made honorary colonel. Knowing the scarlet red would look good on camera, the Queen’s decision was a wise one.

According to Prince Harry: “Behind closed doors, she’s our grandmother. It’s as simple as that”. The demands of their individual schedules may mean that family members are required to make appointments in order to see each other, but the practice is merely a formality, not an indication of a family removed and out of touch. It is, however, what makes family Christmases at Sandringham a time to be cherished. Christmas is the one occasion that allows for the entire family to gather under one roof, free of outside commitments. Like any other family, they have their share of traditions, but the highlight is often the personal or jokey gifts that are exchanged on Christmas Eve.

In her first solo interview for a television documentary, marking the Queen’s 90th birthday, the Duchess of Cambridge spoke of her close bond with the Queen, saying: “At Sandringham for the first time at Christmas... I was worried what to give the Queen as her Christmas present. I was thinking: ‘Gosh, what should I give her?’” She continued: “I thought, ‘I’ll make her something’, which could have gone horribly wrong, but I decided to make my Granny’s recipe of chutney. I was slightly worried about it, but I noticed the next day that it was

on the table. I think such a simple gesture went such a long way for me. I think it just shows her thoughtfulness and her care in looking after everybody.”

Aware of the enormity of Catherine’s future role, the Queen has strived to help her adjust to life in the spotlight since her 2011 marriage to Prince William. In March 2012 both Catherine and Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall, were invited to accompany the Queen on an official engagement to high-end food store Fortnum and Mason. It was the first time the Queen and two future queen consorts had carried out an official ‘working’ engagement together, and the day proved a big success.

Throughout her reign, the Queen has resolutely put duty first, but in 1997 following the death of Diana the welfare of Princes William and Harry was her sole concern. Years from now, historians may say that the week Diana died represented the only time throughout her reign that the Queen put family before all else. In the days leading up to Diana’s funeral she chose to remain at Balmoral to comfort her grieving grandsons. Deafened to the cries of rage from the press over its absentee monarch, she remained steadfast.

Now, over 20 years later, it is easy to understand why she stood her ground, but for a public used to turning to its Queen in times of national crisis, it seemed inconceivable that she didn’t return to London immediately. While one can only speculate over the resolve in her decision, it was perhaps also an opportunity to right the wrongs of early motherhood, when the demands of queenship meant she wasn’t able to be present for her own children during their formative years.

Now in her tenth decade, the Queen is ever more relaxed in her role, both in private and in public, and she can now add great-grandmother to her long list of titles. She might be Her Majesty to the masses, but to the youngest generation she is more commonly known as

“Gan-Gan”, the same name she used when referring to her grandmother, Queen Mary. Her subjects the world over can look to her and learn from a life so impeccably lived, but it was Prince Harry who once said: “I can go to her for advice and bend her ear over all the experience she’s had over the years.”

At the end of the day, isn’t that what grandmothers are for? ■

The Queen is particularly close to William, who would pop over to Windsor to have afternoon tea with her





Glorious palaces

Whether holding court at royal residences or on a private retreat on her own estate, Queen Elizabeth has several impressive homes at her disposal. Those featured on the following pages are all open to the public



WINDSOR CASTLE

Windsor, Berkshire

Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's wedding at Windsor in 2018 was the latest in a long line of events at one of the world's largest inhabited castles. The Queen spent her childhood and most of the war years there, and it's where she goes most weekends. She also uses the castle for official business such as hosting heads of state from overseas. She holds court there for a month each Easter, and stays for a week in June, when she attends the Royal Ascot horseracing event nearby (some of her own horses have won there).

Many royal marriages are held at Windsor, and in 1997 the Queen and Prince Philip celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary there with a ball. The castle has been home to 39 monarchs over 1,000 years, starting with William the Conqueror in 1070. Succeeding monarchs improved and extended the castle.

The 15th-century St George's Chapel is where many British royals are buried including the Queen's father George VI and her mother, plus her sister's ashes. Windsor is one of the finest examples of Gothic style architecture in England and is open to the public; there are regular changing the guard ceremonies (seen above).

→ rct.uk/visit





BALMORAL

Royal Deeside, Aberdeenshire
Balmoral, in the Scottish Highlands, is owned by the royal family, unlike the Royal Palaces, which belong to the Crown. The family's interest began in 1852 when Victoria and Albert bought the estate and built a new castle in the Scottish Baronial style. As she got older, Victoria spent more of her time in retreat at Balmoral.

In 1937 the Queen's parents George VI and Elizabeth renewed interest in the castle and its working estate, complete with grouse moors, deer stalking, forestry, arable farming and pastures. As

a child the Queen visited regularly and now spends summers there, with visits from her family, enjoying the place and its people. Prince Charles (shown above at Balmoral with Princess Anne) and the Duchess of Cornwall have a mansion on the estate. Salmon fishing, horse riding, picnics and dog walking are favourite activities with the royal family.

From April to July parts of Balmoral are open to the public, including formal gardens created in the 1920s and kitchen gardens developed by the Duke of Edinburgh, plus the largest room in the castle, the ballroom.

→ balmoralcastle.com



HILLSBOROUGH

Northern Ireland

Hillsborough is an 18th-century mansion, the official home of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and a royal residence. Elizabeth first stayed there in 1946 while on a solo trip to the province.

In 2005 she met Irish President Mary McAleese there – the first time a reigning monarch had met with a head of an independent Ireland on the island of Ireland. Hillsborough played an important role in the peace process in Northern Ireland since the 1980s, with meetings there helping bring an end to the period of conflict known as the Troubles.

Hillsborough is open to the public and an ambitious project to restore the house and its 100 acre-gardens to their former glory, and improve visitor facilities, is due for completion in Spring 2019.

→ hrp.org.uk





SANDRINGHAM

Sandringham, Norfolk

The country retreat of the Queen, and her own private estate, Sandringham has been managed by the Duke of Edinburgh since 1952. It came under royal ownership in 1862 as a country residence for the Prince of Wales, the future Edward VII. The original house was rebuilt in the Jacobean Style, completed in 1870, and its 60-acre gardens, open to the public since 1908, have been developed by each of its royal owners.

The house was first opened to the public at the Queen's wish in her Silver Jubilee year of 1977. The Queen celebrates Christmas at Sandringham, joined by family members who traditionally visit the church of St Mary Magdalene on the estate. Sandringham is where Elizabeth made her first televised Christmas Queen's Speech (shown below left) in 1957. The house, museum and gardens are open to the public each summer.

→ sandringhamestate.co.uk





HOLYROODHOUSE

Edinburgh

The Queen's official residence in Scotland originated as a monastery in 1128. The palace has been home to royalty for more than five centuries, with Scottish monarchs choosing to live in its parkland setting rather than in Edinburgh Castle – the street between the two royal buildings is called the Royal Mile.

The palace has had associations with some of Scotland's most well-known historic figures including Mary, Queen of Scots, whose 16th-century apartments can be visited, and Bonnie Prince Charlie, who set up court for six weeks in 1745 when he arrived in Scotland to claim the throne of Great Britain for his father. Much of the building dates from 17th-century redevelopment by Charles II, including magnificent royal apartments. In the 20th century, King George V and Queen Mary continued restoration work on the palace, which they enjoyed as a family home.

Queen Elizabeth lives at Holyroodhouse for Royal Week each summer, which starts with a ceremony in which she is given the keys to the city. Her visits celebrate Scottish culture, achievement and community and she entertains around 8,000 guests, including at a garden party (shown, left, in 2017). The palace is open to the public daily. Perhaps its most striking space is the Great Gallery, lined with portraits of Scottish kings commissioned by Charles II. ■

→ [rct.uk/visit](https://www.rct.uk/visit)





THE MONARCH & *her ministers*

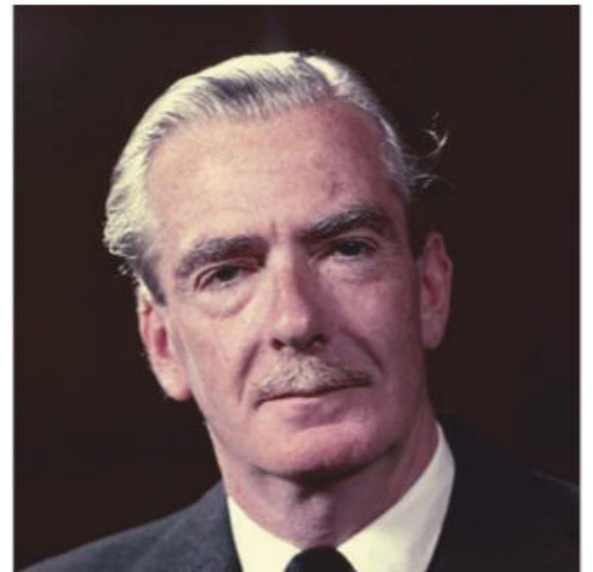
She laughed with Churchill, was 'correct but cool' with Heath and declined the offer to call Blair 'Tony'. The Queen has seen 13 prime ministers reside in Downing Street during her long reign, including current incumbent Theresa May.

FRANCIS BECKETT recounts the relationships of 12 former premiers with a queen who has seen it all



Churchill escorts Queen Elizabeth to her car after dining at 10 Downing Street. The two had a mutually fond relationship

OPPOSITE PAGE A 1965 stamp produced to commemorate the wartime leader's death



Anthony Eden 1955–57

Eden's health was compromised by a botched operation two years before he became premier, and he was irascible and micro-managed his ministers. His premiership ended with the disastrous Suez invasion and a health breakdown.

When he went to see the Queen to be formally appointed prime minister, the two sat around talking of this and that, until Eden thought she wasn't going to ask him to form a government at all – according to Eden's wife Clarissa. So he said: "Well, Ma'am?" and she said: "I suppose I ought to be asking you to form a government".

He found her easy to talk to and to confide in. The Queen found him a sympathetic listener too, and much talk during their early meetings was about Princess Margaret's possible marriage to the divorced Group Captain Peter Townsend. But it is thought she was strongly opposed to Eden's ill-fated Suez adventure, and it made her doubt her prime minister's judgment.

He found her easy to confide in. She found him a sympathetic listener



Winston Churchill 1952–55

Churchill, the wartime premier, lost the 1945 general election but returned to Downing Street in 1951, so when Elizabeth became Queen in 1952, the 77-year-old statesman was her first prime minister – and, some believe, her favourite.

They enjoyed their weekly meetings, laughed a lot, and bonded over a shared interest in horses and

racings. The meetings grew from 30 minutes to two hours. Churchill had great respect for the monarchy, and what the politician Roy Jenkins called "near idolatry" for Elizabeth.

Soon after her coronation, her prime minister had a stroke. When they next met, he told her the truth, which he had hidden from his cabinet colleagues: that he could not be sure if he could go on until he knew whether he could command the Conservative conference and then parliament.

She then invited the Churchills to join her to watch the St Leger and go by royal train to Balmoral. Churchill went and enjoyed himself enormously; it seems to have contributed to his recovery.

Churchill had great respect for the monarchy, and "near idolatry" for Elizabeth

Harold Macmillan 1957–63

When Macmillan became prime minister after the Suez debacle, the Conservative party was bitterly divided and he told the Queen his government might not last six weeks. She reminded him of that when he finally resigned, six successful years later.

When he kissed hands she was “gracious, but brief” according to Macmillan’s diaries, but he valued her grasp of foreign affairs: “She showed, as her father used to, an uncanny knowledge of details and personalities. She must read the telegrams very carefully”. She loved his talent for political gossip.

But he may have led her into a constitutional error. He wanted to be succeeded by Lord Home and apparently persuaded the Queen to exercise her royal prerogative. An early draft letter to her is revealing: “Lord Home is clearly a man who represents the old, governing class at its best and those who take a reasonably impartial view of English history know how good that can be...” She sent for Home, who would not have been the cabinet’s choice.



Douglas-Home shared the Queen’s interest in dogs and shooting



Alec Douglas-Home 1963–64

Lord Home renounced his peerage after he became prime minister. He stood for a safe seat and entered the House of Commons as plain Sir Alec Douglas-Home. He was from an old family of Scottish aristocrats, neighbours of the Queen’s mother’s family, the Bowes-Lyons. So he was the first of the Queen’s premiers to whom she was already close – a childhood friend of the Queen Mother. “She loved Alec – he was an old friend,” said one aide. “They talked about dogs and shooting together... they were the same sort of people.”

Douglas-Home helped the Queen name several royal horses over the years. According to the historian DR

Thorpe, when Douglas-Home first went to Balmoral on a prime ministerial visit, he heard the sound of the Queen’s official bagpiper before breakfast – a sound he had not heard when simply visiting as an old friend – and he therefore suggested calling three foals ‘Blessed Relief’ [by] ‘Bagpipes’ [out of] ‘Earshot’.

He was the first of the Queen’s premiers to whom she was already close



Harold Wilson 1964–70 and 1974–76

The first Labour prime minister for 13 years, Wilson wanted to get the protocol right, and wrote in his autobiography: “Contrary to all I had understood about the procedures, there was no formal kissing of hands”.

But he enjoyed his weekly meetings with the Queen. He said they were the only times when he could have a serious conversation, which would not be leaked, with somebody who wasn’t after his job. She enjoyed them too – after Churchill, Wilson may have been her favourite PM. They were closer in age than some of her prime ministers, and he was the first one not to come from the traditional ruling class; the Queen was learning for the first time about people not in her social class.

“Harold was very fond of her and she reciprocated it,” said Labour cabinet minister Barbara Castle. “He made her feel at ease [and] kept her well-informed.” Royal biographer Robert Lacey says: “Wilson persuaded the Queen to drop a lot of stuffy protocol that had remained since Queen Victoria.”

Edward Heath 1970–74

Edward Heath was the first Conservative leader to be elected by a ballot of the party’s MPs. He will be remembered as the prime minister who took Britain into the EEC.

Heath failed to charm the Queen and they had a difficult relationship. He was not good at small talk, and not always comfortable with women, and they held different views about the Commonwealth, to which she held a great attachment. Heath biographer John Campbell describes their relationship as “correct but cool”.

But Heath, like his predecessors, found her well-informed – she “is undoubtedly one of the best-informed people in the world”, he wrote. And the troubles in Northern Ireland brought them together. Heath records a meeting of despair with the Queen, where both contemplated with horror and tears what was happening there.



James Callaghan 1976–79

Callaghan became prime minister after Harold Wilson’s surprise resignation, and held on until he was swept away by the Thatcher landslide in 1979. What you get from the Queen, he said, is “friendliness but not friendship”.

The pair got on well and Callaghan was so careful about not betraying her confidence that he would not even tell the Queen’s private secretary what they talked about. The Queen enjoyed his company. He once told her he was having trouble deciding about an issue, and before he could ask her opinion she told him: “That’s what you’re paid for”.

Harold Wilson noted that the Queen respected those who had served in the armed forces, and this made her relationship with Callaghan, who had been in the Royal Navy, more relaxed. He was the son of a seaman, brought up in poverty and socially conservative, all of which endeared him to her.

The Queen enjoyed his company and respected his naval background



Margaret Thatcher 1979–90

The Thatcher premiership marked the end of the postwar Attlee settlement and a major shift of wealth and power from the public to the private sectors.

You may have expected the Queen to feel close to her first woman premier and the one nearest to her in age. But their relationship was not always easy and the Queen was thought to be anxious at the human cost of Thatcherism. Biographer Charles Moore says Thatcher's attitude was "compounded of constitutional correctness, old-fashioned deference and a certain unease, probably related to the fact that both were women, and neither had much experience of working with women at a high level".

While other premiers enjoyed weekends at Balmoral, Thatcher saw them as interrupting her work. But the Queen did help to broker peace over the Falklands victory service, when church leaders wanted a service of reconciliation, which Thatcher thought betrayed the soldiers.

Thatcher saw weekends at Balmoral as interrupting her work

John Major 1990–97

While John Major was dealing with the Gulf War and an economic downturn, his monarch was coping with the likely divorce of her son Charles. Their audiences are said to have been a bit like mutual support sessions, and she valued his private advice.

He has called her "compassionate, shrewd, well-informed, pragmatic and wise, with an unshakeable commitment to duty". He says she "may well offer counsel – perhaps through well-directed questions – that any prime minister would be foolish not to consider with care. All of them soon learn that the Queen, far from being cut off from her people, is very much aware of the shifting tides of public opinion – indeed often ahead of it."

Nonetheless, it was Major who took the decision that Britain could no longer afford the Royal Yacht *Britannia* (a decision often wrongly attributed to Tony Blair). The Queen regretted this, believing the yacht had enabled her to visit the smaller, more remote Commonwealth countries.



Tony Blair 1997–2007

Tony Blair won Labour's biggest ever majority and became the party's longest-serving prime minister. Yet his name now tends to be mostly associated with the decision to go to war in Iraq.

He was born just a month before the Queen was crowned in 1953. He was a man of a new generation and his advice on the Queen's family problems was less appreciated than his predecessor John Major's had been. Blair recalled his first audience. "She was... direct. 'You are my 10th prime minister. The first was Winston. That was before you were born.' I got a sense of my relative seniority, or lack of it." She declined his invitation to call him Tony.

When Princess Diana died, neither the Spencer family nor the royal family wanted a big funeral, but Blair believed there was a public demand for it, and insisted the royal family needed to mourn publicly. When the Queen Mother died in 2002, the palace took steps to prevent Blair taking over her funeral in the way that he had with Diana's.

The Queen was, though, a good source of advice for Blair. He once asked her about another head of state, saying: "I'm really struggling to get on with him". She replied: "Try cricket, that's his subject".



Brown was the only prime minister to take his wife and children to his audience with the Queen

Gordon Brown 2007–10

As a Scot and the son of a Scottish Presbyterian minister, prime minister Gordon Brown was someone that the Queen felt she understood.

Brown's brief premiership ended in electoral defeat in May 2010, and the Queen was among the millions who watched television pictures of the prime minister walking out of Downing

Street with his wife and two young children. A discreet telephone call was made, and Brown's final audience with the Queen took place with his sons and wife Sarah by his side. It was the first time in the Queen's reign that any departing prime ministers had met with her while accompanied by their children.

The Queen was among the millions who watched the prime minister walking out of Downing Street with his wife and two young children

GETTY IMAGES

David Cameron 2010–2016

David Cameron's premiership marked a return of the old wealthy families to Downing Street, for the first time since Alec Douglas-Home. Cameron attended an exclusive boarding school called Heatherdown with Prince Edward. The Heatherdown production of *Toad of Toad Hall* featured Cameron as Harold Rabbit and Edward as Mole.

They are even distantly related. Cameron is a direct descendant of King William IV, the Queen's great-great-great-uncle.

Yet Cameron made protocol slipups that less well connected prime ministers have avoided, and they irritated the Queen. The morning in 2014 that the polls indicated that Scotland might vote for independence, Cameron was staying with her in Balmoral, and the atmosphere over breakfast was said to have been frosty. Scotland leaving the UK horrified the Queen so much she came closer to intervening publicly than ever before, saying: "I hope people will think very carefully," as she left church. Cameron later had to apologise for saying publicly that she "purred" when he told her independence had been rejected. His premiership ended abruptly when he lost the Brexit vote. ■



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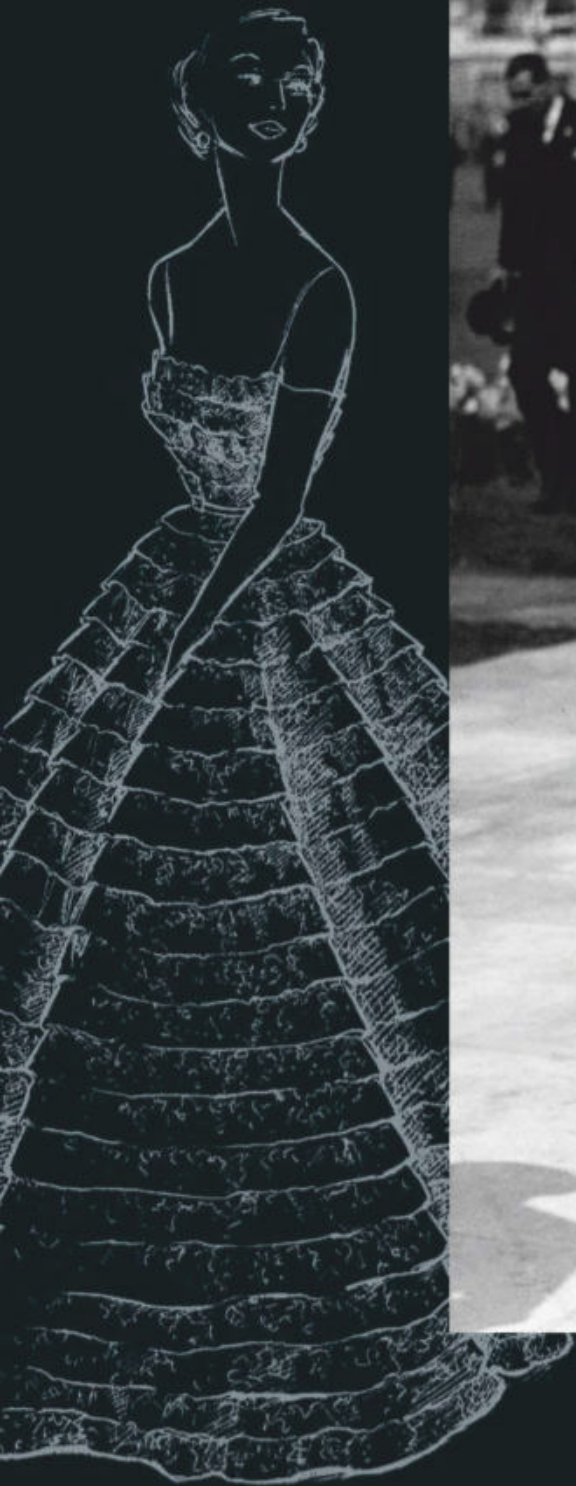
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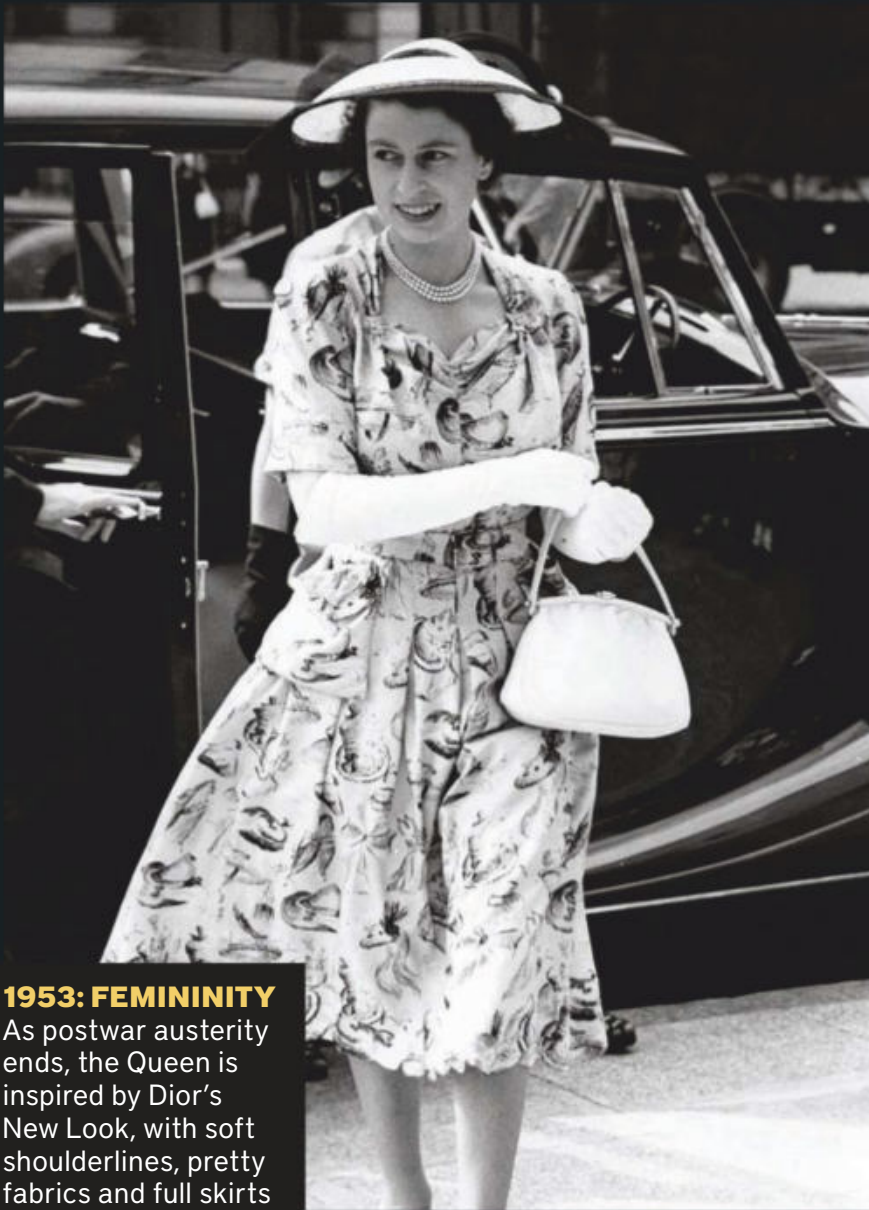
1948: TREND SETTERS

The young princesses were a focus for glamour and fashion in postwar Britain



Dressing to impress

From haute couture and evening glitz to chic working wardrobes fit for touring the globe, we trace how royal fashion has evolved during Elizabeth's six decades on the throne



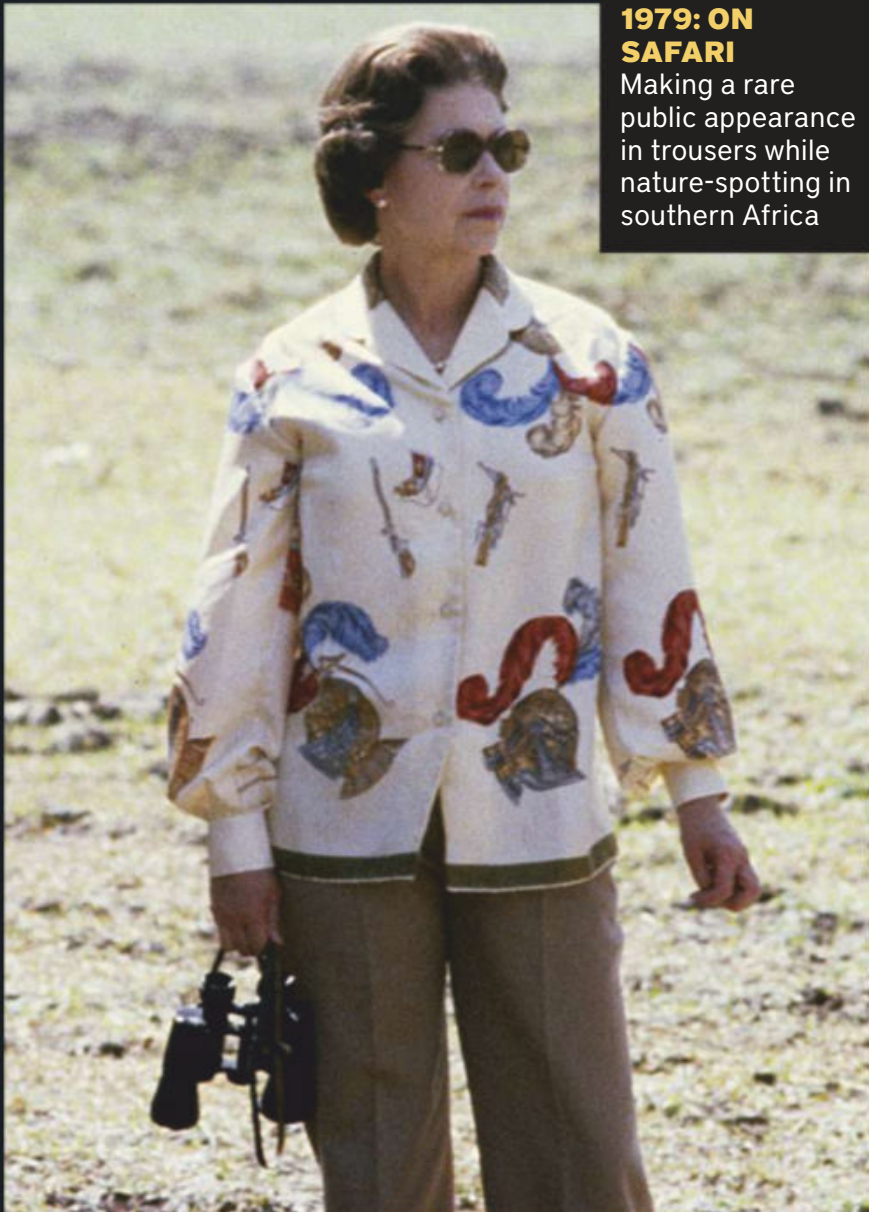
1953: FEMININITY
As postwar austerity ends, the Queen is inspired by Dior's New Look, with soft shoulderlines, pretty fabrics and full skirts

1966: IN UNIFORM

Until she started going by carriage, the Queen wore Scots Guard uniform for Trooping the Colour every year from 1952 to 1986



1970: BRIGHT SIDE
In lemon yellow on an overseas tour. Bold, block colours have long been a signature look in order to help the Queen stand out in a crowd

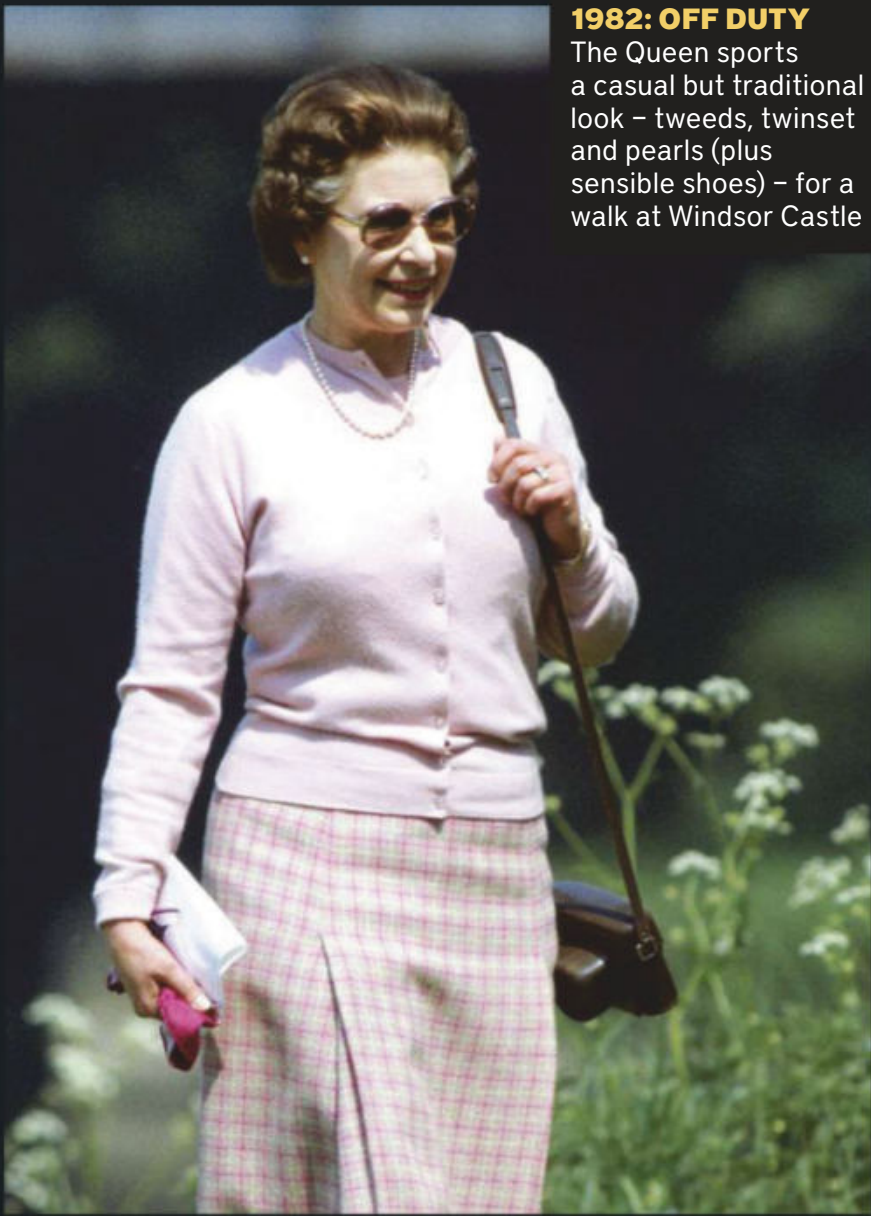


1979: ON SAFARI
Making a rare public appearance in trousers while nature-spotting in southern Africa



MATCHMAKER

Shades may vary, but the Queen's wardrobe is always well coordinated



1982: OFF DUTY

The Queen sports a casual but traditional look – tweeds, twinset and pearls (plus sensible shoes) – for a walk at Windsor Castle



1993: SUMMER DRESS

The queen adopts a less structured and more colourful style for a relaxed event in Cyprus prior to a Commonwealth function



2001: GOLDEN GOWN

Resplendent in Hardy Amies, official dressmaker to the Queen for 50 years. He helped establish a crisp look with sharper silhouettes



2018: ROYAL ASCOT
This typifies key functional requirements for royal outfits: bright for visibility, a hat that musn't fly off or overshadow the face and a weighted hem in case of gusty winds ■

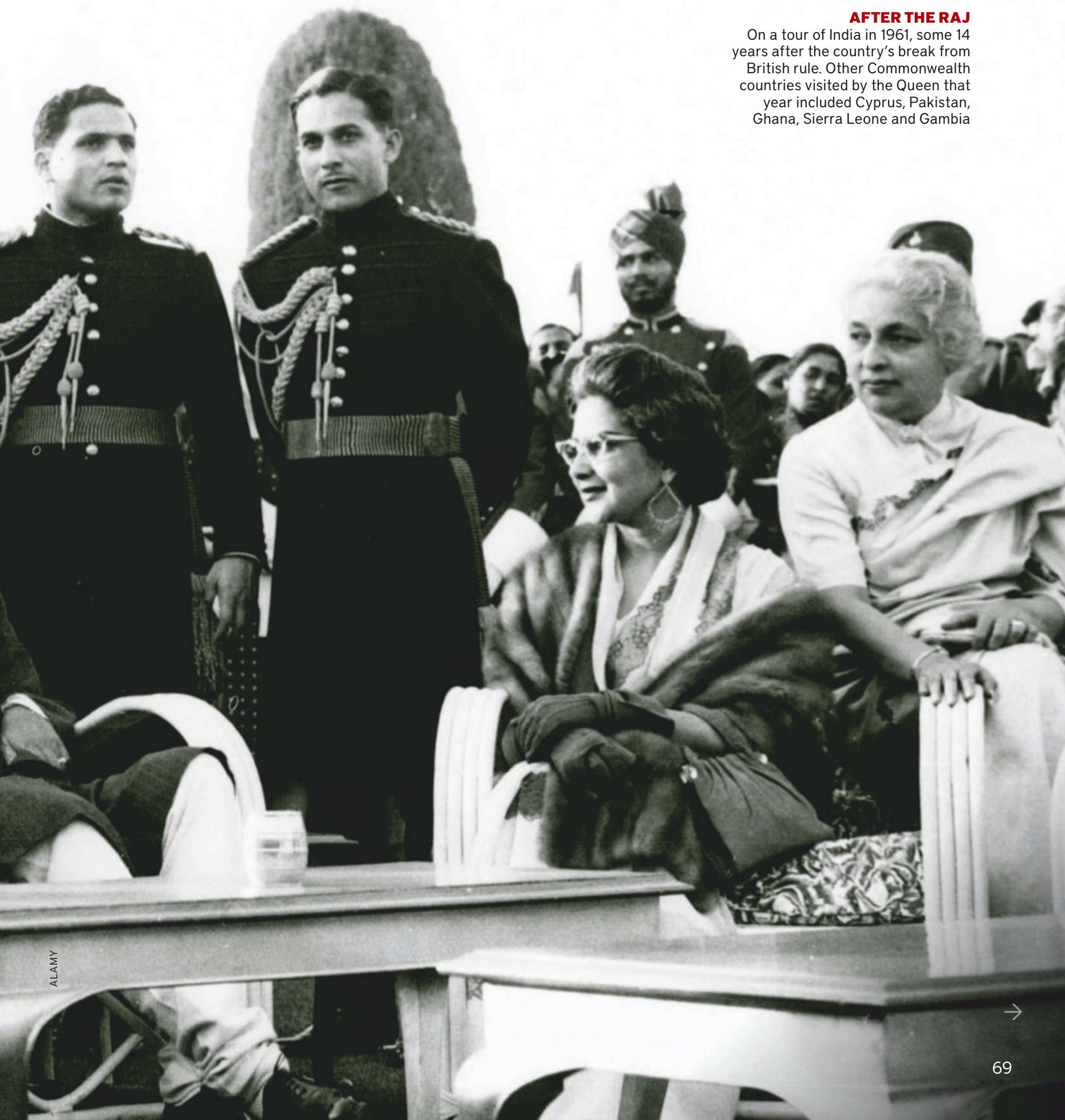
The Queen and the Commonwealth



As Britain was losing its grip on a shrinking empire, Elizabeth II pledged her “heart and soul” as the head of the Commonwealth. **ASHLEY JACKSON** looks at her special status among nations and her role as an agent of international change

AFTER THE RAJ

On a tour of India in 1961, some 14 years after the country's break from British rule. Other Commonwealth countries visited by the Queen that year included Cyprus, Pakistan, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Gambia



The modern Commonwealth and Elizabeth II grew up together. They are age-mates – one might force an analogy and call them twins. Elizabeth’s birth year, 1926, was also the year of the Balfour Declaration (named after Arthur Balfour, as was the famous 1917 letter on the future of Palestine), a landmark statement acknowledging the independence of the ‘white’ Dominions in relation to Britain, bound only by their attachment to the crown. It was the Commonwealth’s foundational moment and the declaration’s principles extended to the empire’s non-white territories following the Second World War. The process of decolonisation, and the evolution of the Commonwealth of Nations that shadowed it, became leitmotifs of the new Elizabethan age, from the independence of Ghana in 1957 to the hand-over of Hong Kong four decades later.

I should make clear that any article on the Queen demands the caveat that much of what is written is speculative. This is because the Queen has not created a personal archive open to the public, published voluminous diaries or memoirs, granted interviews, or reflected autobiographically on *Desert Island Discs*. Given this, we are fortunate to have Philip Murphy’s study of the Queen, *Monarchy and the End of Empire* (2013), to guide us here.

The royal family’s role and identity became entwined with the British empire during Victoria’s reign and, by the time Elizabeth was born, the Windsors had become an imperial dynasty. In that interwar autumn of British power, against the backdrop of a vast empire buffeted by fissiparous currents of nationalism and the tide of British decline, the monarchy was nurtured as a symbol of unity. As a girl, Elizabeth observed her parents embarking on royal tours, such as the 1939 visit to North America. She accompanied them on the 1947 southern Africa tour, her debut as a royal performer on the international stage. The

trip afforded her a vivid preview of the Commonwealth duties that lay ahead. Conveyed aboard Britain’s last great battleship, HMS *Vanguard*, the tour took in Bechuanaland, Basutoland, the Rhodesias and South Africa. Over a month of the four-month expedition was spent sleeping aboard the ‘White Train’ which carried them for much of the journey between Cape Town, Salisbury and the Victoria Falls.

On the occasion of her 21st birthday, Elizabeth made a memorable debut broadcast from Cape Town to the empire-Commonwealth. The South African government made it the highlight of the visit, declaring a national holiday, and the young princess delivered a striking speech noted both for the words, written by the king’s private secretary, Sir Alan Lascelles, and for the sincerity with which they were enunciated. She addressed “the youth of the British family of nations” and pledged her life to the service of the Commonwealth – a “solemn act of dedication”, she said, made “with a whole empire listening”. This tour profoundly affected her outlook, helping to establish a Commonwealth interest and loyalty that became a consistent theme of her reign. Shortly after this defining tour, and further developing her Commonwealth perspective, Princess Elizabeth lived in Malta from 1949–51, where Prince Philip was stationed with the Mediterranean Fleet.

In 1952, Princess Elizabeth and her husband embarked on a tour of Australasia and east Africa. Undertaken on behalf of the ailing George VI, they made it no further than Kenya before news of his death was received. She thus became Queen while in the Aberdare mountains, in sight of Mount Kenya. The subsequent coronation was the swansong of the great imperial procession. Nevertheless, it featured adjustments that reflected the reality of the newly emergent Commonwealth. For example, the Accession Proclamation omitted reference to the ‘Imperial Crown’ – which would have had no meaning for independent India – employing

In the first dozen years of her reign, the empire all but disappeared... in 1965 the term ‘British empire’ had ceased commonly to be used

EARLY OVERSEAS TOUR With her sister and mother in South Africa in 1947, a trip that ignited the young princess's interest in the Commonwealth



SOLEMN VOW Making her noted 21st birthday Cape Town speech in which she pledged her devotion to the "British family of nations"



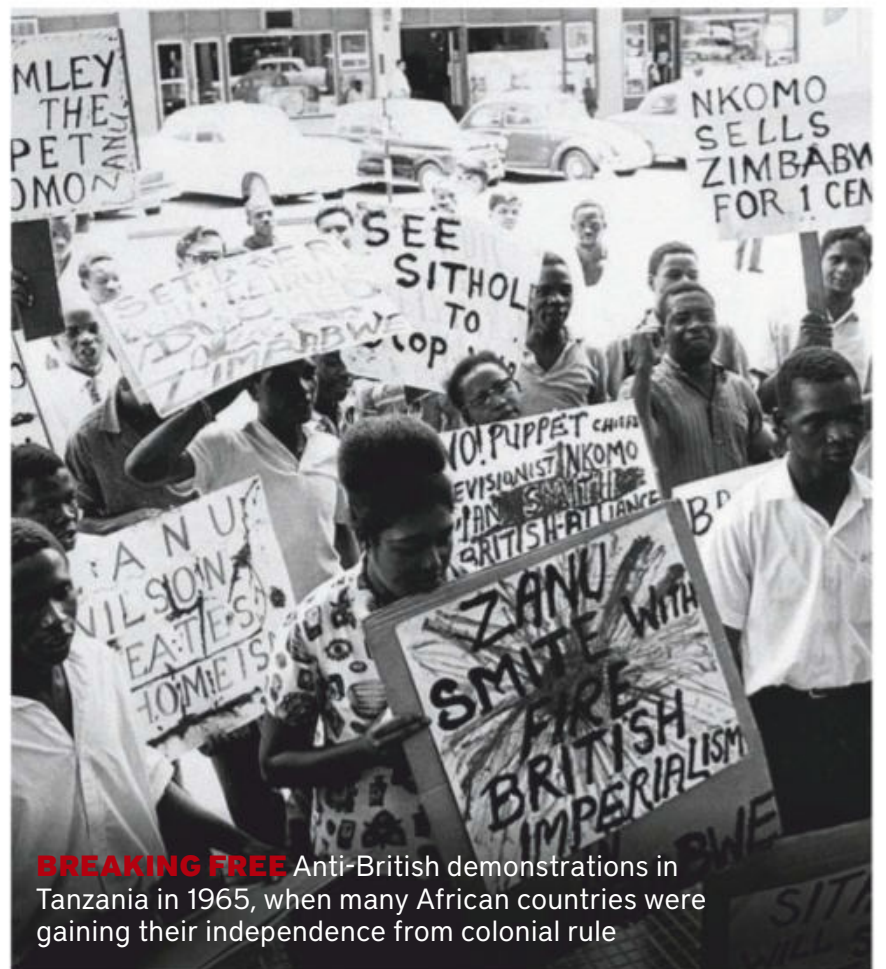
FRAGMENTING EMPIRE Lord and Lady Mountbatten greet crowds at the end of crown rule in India, August 1947



WARM RECEPTION Touring New Zealand in 1954, one of the 12 Commonwealth countries she visited in the year following her coronation



LETTING GO In Nigeria – then Britain's most populous remaining colony – four years before the country gained its independence in 1960



BREAKING FREE Anti-British demonstrations in Tanzania in 1965, when many African countries were gaining their independence from colonial rule

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The Commonwealth was not going to be the vehicle for world power that many politicians had hoped... it was not going to be a British empire-lite

instead the term 'Head of Commonwealth'. Elizabeth's sense of destiny and duty was confirmed by the event, with its strong Commonwealth flavour, including the presence of 300 guests from the empire-Commonwealth in Westminster Abbey alone.

Soon after her coronation, the Queen embarked on a 40,000-mile Commonwealth tour which took her to the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, Aden, east Africa, Ceylon, Australasia and the Pacific. The 1953 Christmas Day broadcast came from Auckland and in it the Queen stressed that the Commonwealth bore "no resemblance to the empires of the past. It is an entirely new conception – built on the higher qualities of the spirit of man: friendship, loyalty, and the desire for freedom and peace. To that new conception of an equal partnership of nations and races I shall give my heart and soul every day of my life."

Looking forward from the vantage point of 1952 and Elizabeth's accession, most of the British empire remained intact. Although change was afoot in the world, she would not have known just how rapidly it would come. No one did. Yet in the first dozen years of her reign, the empire all but disappeared, to the point that in 1965 the term 'British empire' had ceased commonly to be used. With the emergence of a multiracial Commonwealth of independent nations sporting divergent interests, the Queen's role became one of providing continuity during transformation. The process of decolonisation gathered pace in the 1950s, entered a sprint in the 1960s, then slowed to a steady pace in the 1970s and a trickle in the 1980s. Decolonisation meant that the modern Commonwealth was not going to be the vehicle for British world power that many politicians had hoped for. It was not going to be a British empire-lite. A key aspect of the Queen's interpretation and performance of her role as head of the Commonwealth was her understanding of the fact that this was irrevocably a multiracial and multinational association. Ahead of the curve, unlike many of

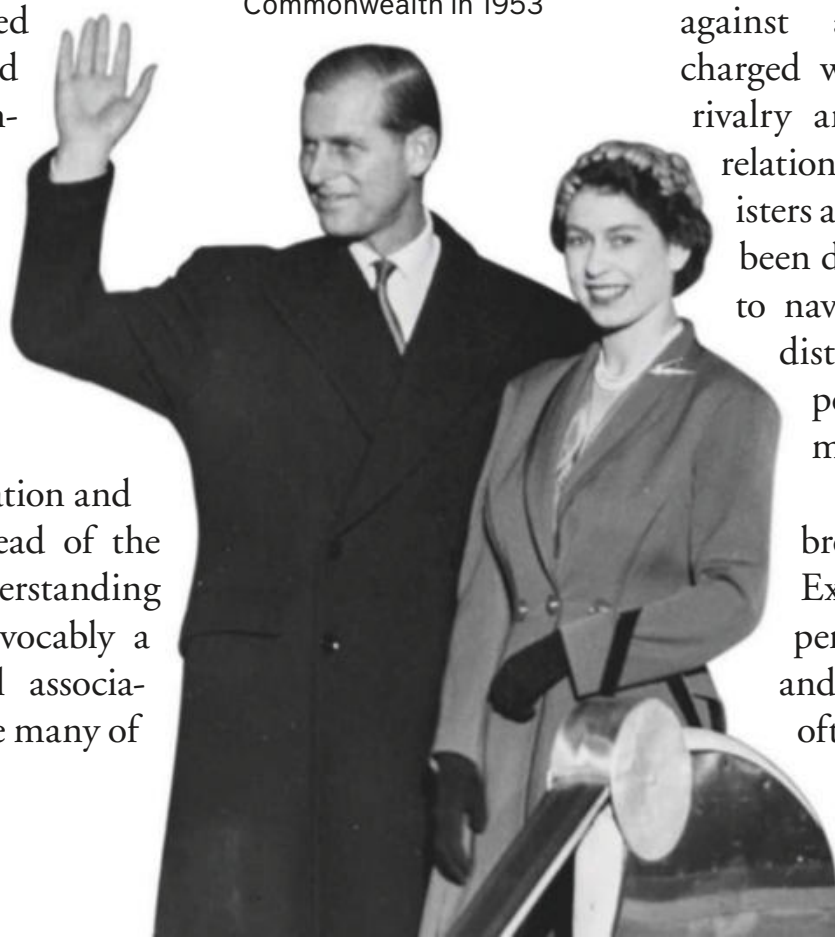
her ministers and indeed her British subjects, she discerned the need to avoid 'old' ideas of imperial loyalty or Anglo-Saxon superiority and instead to embrace new members. She emphasised the importance of common history, ideas and values – theoretically shared by the diverse people of the Commonwealth, even if not by their leaders.

The vicissitudes of international politics, inevitably, rent, repaired and refashioned the Commonwealth cloth. There were high-profile departures, such as those of Ireland, South Africa and Fiji; expulsions, applications to rejoin, applications to join anew from countries never under British rule; invasions of Commonwealth realms and damaging intra-Commonwealth disputes. Differences over republicanism, Britain's applications to join the EEC, declining British-Commonwealth trade and the fundamental realities of political divergence, shaped the Commonwealth. So too did the desire of some Commonwealth states to strengthen ties with Britain and with the monarchy, creating what has been termed a 'royal Commonwealth'. Moments of high drama such as the Suez Crisis strained relations between Commonwealth countries and Britain, as did slow-burning issues such as the response to struggles against white minority rule in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe and South Africa.

As head of state, as head of the Commonwealth and as Queen, Elizabeth negotiated the many challenges of independence, evolving relationships with new countries, and protocol. This was against an international landscape charged with the currents of east-west rivalry and north-south discord. The relationship with her own prime ministers and governments has sometimes been difficult and obliged the Queen to navigate a different course or to distance herself from government policies and the conduct of her ministers.

So what has Elizabeth II brought to the Commonwealth? Experts inevitably point to personal qualities, relationships and conduct. Her sensitivity is often remarked upon, as is her →

Departing for Bermuda on the first leg of a six-month tour of the Commonwealth in 1953



fundamental awareness of the Commonwealth as a postcolonial entity. Her awareness of other people and sense of caring is widely regarded, as is the strength of relationships that she has developed with the many leaders with whom she has dealt over a span of seven decades. This has engendered personal loyalties and affinities with Commonwealth leaders, irrespective of their politics or ideologies or, indeed, the attitude of British governments towards them. The Queen's attendance at key Commonwealth events, such as the regular Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings, brings the emollient presence of a central figure outside of politics and one possessed of unrivalled experience. For many of the Commonwealth's smaller states, recognition of the Queen and Commonwealth offers a sense of security and connection with the wider world.



With Nehru in 1961 during the first visit by a monarch to India since George V in 1911

It also helps that the Queen has visited 116 countries, including those of the Commonwealth; she is probably the most widely-travelled head of state in history. Royal tours and state visits have become ineffable features of international diplomacy, Britain's global profile and the modern Commonwealth. Tours and visits have been innumerable, including milestones such as the 1961 visit to India and Pakistan (which set the tone for visits to Commonwealth republics), the 2011 visit to Ireland and the tour of South Africa in 1995. Such occasions attracted significant media attention and sometimes marked major changes in relations between Britain and the countries involved, or key developments in their political and constitutional history.

Largely because the Commonwealth failed to develop as an agency of British power, the British government and establishment, and indeed the British people, lost interest and collectively forgot why, apart from shared history, it was there. But the Queen did not. Unlike her

position as monarch of the United Kingdom, the headship of the modern Commonwealth was something that she had been instrumental in creating. Her roles as head of a Commonwealth of 53 nations and head of state in 16 of them continued to be taken with a seriousness not necessarily reflected in Westminster or Whitehall.

It has been speciously suggested that the Queen needed the Commonwealth more than the other way around. The historian

Ben Pimlott succinctly (and more accurately) captured the symbiotic relationship: "The monarchy, with its imperial memory, keenly sought a Commonwealth role, partly to justify itself, but also because it had taken its supra-national role seriously, and – in a way that was never quite understood by politicians – it continued to relate to distant communities which showed their loyalty in ways that did not necessarily come to the attention of Whitehall."

Harold Macmillan said that the Commonwealth "offered opportunities for a monarchical role, carved out for herself, that the United Kingdom could not provide". The Commonwealth might have become a loose association and ties to the former 'mother country' been eroded by decolonisation, globalisation, demographic change, divergent views and changing patterns of trade. But the umbilical cord that linked states constitutionally to the monarchy continued to give the palace a different perspective and created a new space of contact – one beyond, in many ways, British society and politics. The question is how long these historical and, in some ways, anomalous links will continue, and where the extraordinary relationship that has developed between the Queen and the Commonwealth will go. ■

SHUTTERSTOCK

The British people lost interest and collectively forgot why, apart from shared history, the Commonwealth was there. But the Queen did not



WORLD LEADERS Hosting the Commonwealth prime ministers (including Winston Churchill) at Buckingham Palace during the 1955 Commonwealth conference



NEW BLOOD? With President Mary McAleese on the first royal visit to Ireland, in 2011. Some have lobbied for the republic to rejoin the Commonwealth



HEAD OF COMMONWEALTH Elizabeth II at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, 2018. Leaders renewed their commitment to the Commonwealth and announced Prince Charles will be its next Head

Elizabeth II

On tour

Victoria may have ruled over 70 territories, but she never left Europe. In contrast, our own jet-setting queen, although the head of just 16, is the most well-travelled monarch in history. Here we highlight some of the hundreds of official visits of her globe-trotting reign



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UGANDA, 2007

Amid security fears, the Queen visits Uganda for the first time since the days of colonial rule. Independent since 1962, the country is nonetheless rapturous in its welcome, with half a million people thronging the roadsides as she visits a centre for Aids orphans and opens the Commonwealth Heads Meeting





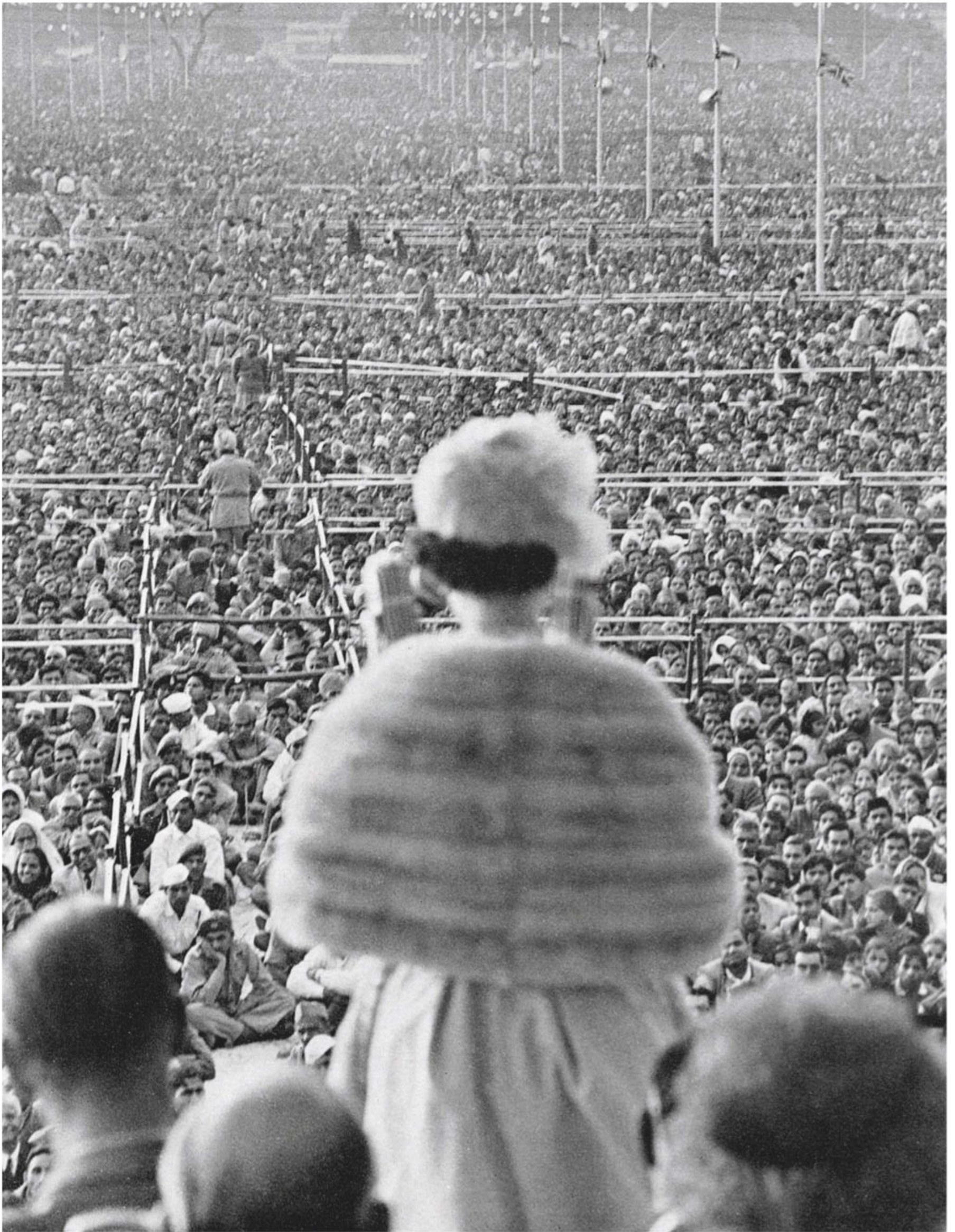
USA, 1951 As King George VI's health declines, Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh take his place for a tour of Canada and then Washington DC. On the visit they are warmly met by President Truman and enthusiastic crowds greet her motorcade



AUSTRALIA, 1954 Boarding HMAS *Australia*, one of the cruisers that escorts the royal yacht *Gothic* into Sydney, during the coronation world tour. The Queen will visit nearly 70 cities and towns in 58 days on this, the first of 16 tours that she will undertake down under



MALTA, 1954 With Prince Charles, Princess Anne and Lady Mountbatten, en route to watching Prince Philip play in a navy versus army polo match during her first trip to the island as Queen. It is a poignant visit: Malta is the only place outside Britain that she has called home, and she is said to have loved the freedom of her time there pre-accession, living the relatively normal private life of a newlywed naval bride



MARY EVANS

INDIA, 1961 At Ramlila Grounds outside Old Delhi, upwards of 250,000 gather to hear the Queen. Although free from crown rule for more than a decade, ties with Britain remain strong and there's a fervent response to the visit, with vast crowds greeting her throughout the six-week tour (that also takes in Pakistan). The warm Indian welcome features lavish banquets, elephant rides, horse racing and spectacular parades





NEW ZEALAND, 1970 An exhibition of Maori culture in Gisborne, North Island is one highlight at the beginning of what proves to be the Queen’s most-travelled decade. It is this tour that sees the first ever royal ‘walkabouts’, when she breaks away from formal arrangements to walk among the crowds, chatting and accepting bouquets. Walkabouts will subsequently become a fixture of almost all royal visits



HONG KONG, 1975 This is the first of just two visits made by the monarch to the British colony on the southern coast of China. In 1997, Prince Charles will read a farewell speech on the Queen’s behalf, as sovereignty is handed to China



SOUTH PACIFIC, 1982 Traditional canoes bring the Queen ashore from HMY *Britannia* to the remote Funafuti atoll of Tuvalu. This month’s island-hopping itinerary also takes in the other Commonwealth realms of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Nauru, Kiribati and Fiji

GETTY IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK



FIJI, 1982 The Queen ends her month-long South Pacific tour with an inspection of the Guard of Honour at Fiji's Nadi airport prior to leaving for London. This is the sixth visit of her reign, at a time when Fiji is still a sovereign state within the Commonwealth of Nations. Declaring itself a republic in 1987, Fiji's Great Council of Chiefs nonetheless will continue to recognise Elizabeth II as *Tui Viti* or Queen of Fiji for several years



FRANCE, 1992 In the company of President Mitterand on a four-day visit. The Queen speaks French throughout her tour of Paris, Blois and Bordeaux – although she remains diplomatically quiet on the arguments raging around the Maastricht Treaty and European unity



MALAYSIA, 1998 Mass protests against the long-standing Barisan Nasional government coincide with the monarch's arrival for the Commonwealth Games. The visit – including a 'courtesy call' with the country's prime minister – continues despite the angry clashes

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CANADA, 2002 The Queen wraps up her jubilee year with a visit to the territory of Nunavut. Carrying on a tradition of royal trips to Canada dating back to Prince William (later William IV) in the 18th century, it is the place she has visited more than any other – 22 trips to date. The monarchy's future there is perhaps less certain: a 2015 poll finds 39 per cent of Canadians favour its abolition after her death



NIGERIA, 2003 In her first visit since 1956 (four years before the country attained independence from Britain), and amid concerns of a possible al-Qaeda attack, the Queen's contact with ordinary Nigerians is limited to meeting actors at a mock-up market created for a BBC soap-opera



USA, 2007 "Good morning, your Majesty." Astronauts Sunita Williams, Fyodor Yurchikhin and Oleg Kotov on board the International Space Station greet the Queen at NASA Goddard Space Center mission control, Maryland

GETTY IMAGES



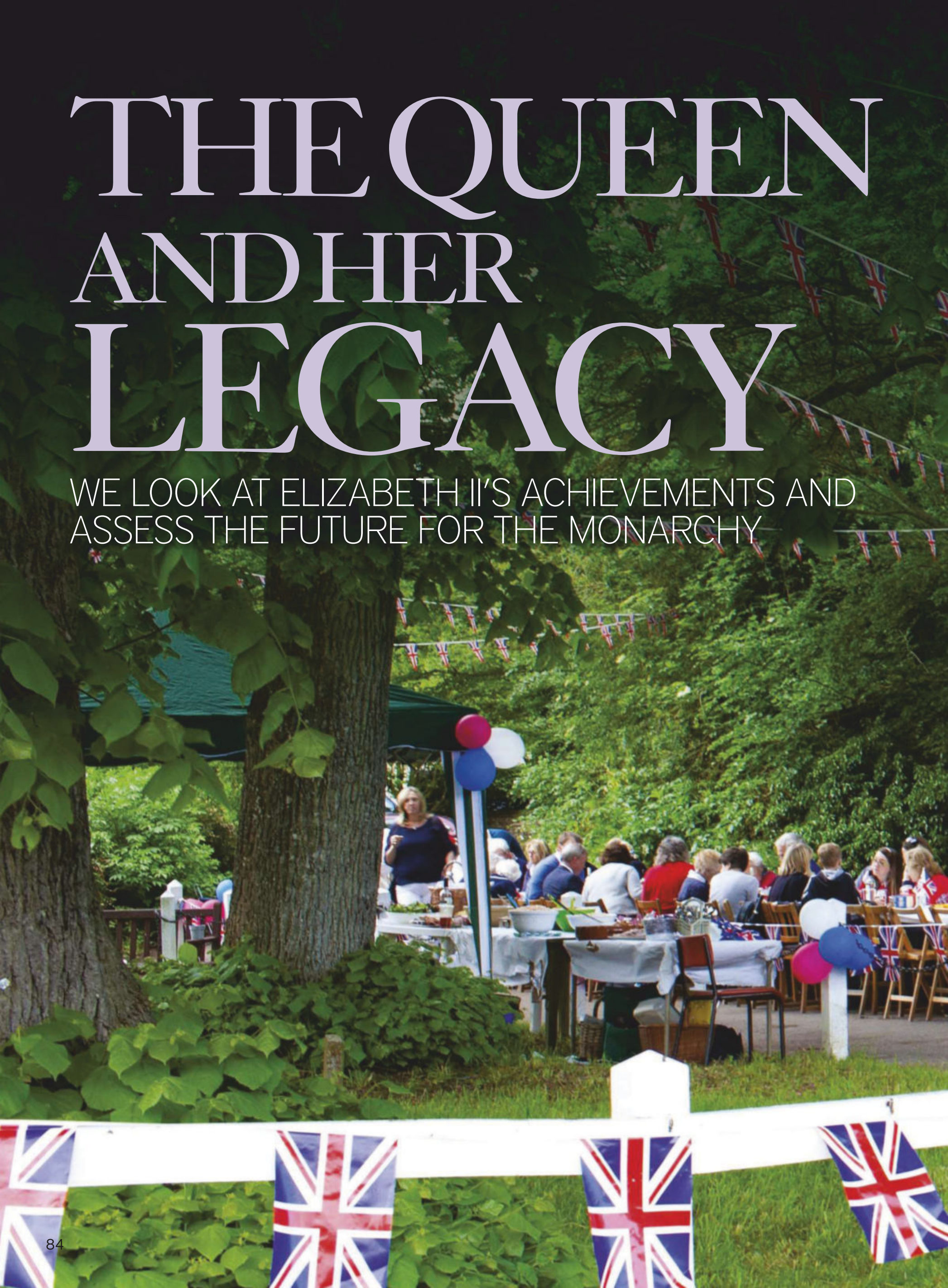
SLOVAKIA, 2008 The Queen and Prince Philip are escorted on a two-day tour by President Ivan Gasparovic. It's the first ever royal visit to the country, which split from the former Czechoslovakia in 1993. At a banquet in her honour, the Queen speaks of Slovakia's troubled past: "Caught behind a line dividing east from west for so long, Slovakia has now asserted its place in a common European home in less turbulent times"



GERMANY, 2015 Laying a wreath at Berlin's Neue Wache memorial during a four-day tour that also includes a trip to the former Nazi concentration camp Bergen-Belsen. During her speech at an official state dinner (where attendees include David Cameron and Angela Merkel), she says: "In our lives, we have seen the worst but also the best of our continent" ■

THE QUEEN AND HER LEGACY

WE LOOK AT ELIZABETH II'S ACHIEVEMENTS AND
ASSESS THE FUTURE FOR THE MONARCHY





+ ROYAL JUBILEES

The nation's view of the Queen

+ A SOVEREIGN'S SECRETS

How Elizabeth secured a successful reign

+ THE QUEEN ON SCREEN

Films that fictionalised Elizabeth's life

+ THE CROWN

Our fascination with the 'biopic'

+ A LIFETIME OF CHANGE

The Queen in an era of transformation

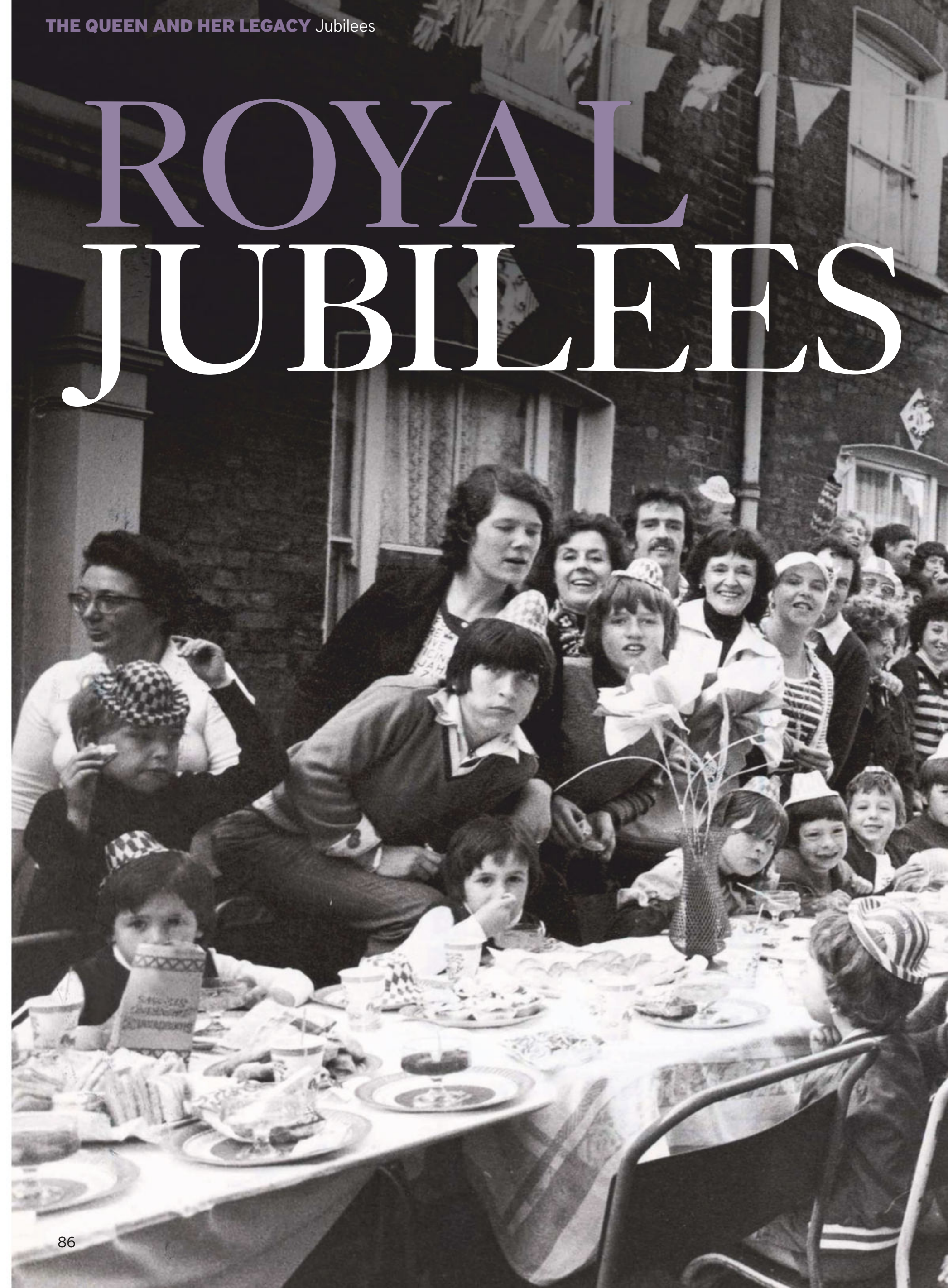
+ CHANGING FACE OF MONARCHY

How fit for the future is the institution?

CELEBRATING THE QUEEN

Residents of a Cotswold village celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012 with a traditional street party

ROYAL JUBILEES





Royal anniversary celebrations have long been a litmus test of the public mood. **STEPHEN BATES** looks at the major milestones of Elizabeth II's reign and what they tell us about Britain's changing views of the monarchy

STREET FEASTS

Street parties, like this one in Deptford, London in June 1977, have been a feature of royal commemorations as far back as Victoria's diamond jubilee →

1977

The Queen's Silver Jubilee

Despite the challenges of the time, huge numbers marked Her Majesty's milestone

The success of the celebrations for the Queen's 25 years on the throne was by no means a foregone conclusion. The country was in an economic crisis, having been bailed out by the International Monetary Fund the previous year. There was a mood of political instability and discontent. Irreverent punk rock was the sound of the late seventies: the Sex Pistols launched their version of 'God Save the Queen' to coincide with the jubilee.

Princess Margaret's affair with Roddy Llewellyn, a landscape gardener (and baronet) who was 18 years her junior, had caused ribald headlines and there was a general sense of fraying tawdriness about the country.

James Callaghan's minority Labour government was reluctant to spend money on a celebration but was talked into it by Sir Martin Charteris, the Queen's private secretary, despite warnings in the press that it was unlikely to be a success because no one would want to celebrate the monarchy.

The predictions were all proved wrong. Although the weather was grey over jubilee weekend in June, there were thousands of street parties – 4,000 in London alone – and the crowds along the Queen's processional route in the state coach

ALAMY

Royal jubilee celebrations have a longer history than might be imagined, despite the fact that most British monarchs have not lived long enough to reach one.

The first was in October 1809, held on what was actually the 49th anniversary of George III's accession. It was the height of the Napoleonic Wars, which were not going well, and was intended, in the words of a Mrs Biggs who wrote to the Lord Chamberlain, the Earl of Dartmouth suggesting a festival, to "excite a spirit of loyal enthusiasm". It was a success: there were pig roasts and celebratory dinners all over the country, an amnesty for (non-French) prisoners, prayers in churches, bonuses for clerks and messengers in the City of London and firework displays and parades. Just as well they did not wait: exactly a year later, the king, grief-stricken over the declining health and then death of his youngest daughter, relapsed into mental illness.

In June 1887, Queen Victoria had to be persuaded to mark her golden jubilee (her silver jubilee was in 1862, just after Prince Albert's death, so was not celebrated). After 50 years, the golden jubilee would be "just hustle and bustle", she said, and the government was reluctant to spend money on it too. The queen, not universally popular, was booed on a visit to the East End of London. But the

crowned heads of Europe gathered together – 30 kings and princes, mostly relatives – and there were fireworks, a naval review and a service at Westminster Abbey.

Ten years later, the celebrations were more lavish, although relations between crowned heads were so bad that they were not invited and it became an imperial celebration instead, with troops from all over the empire on parade. The procession to St Paul's was one of the first events to be filmed. Huge crowds cheered the queen. She was by then too frail to leave her carriage to attend the cathedral service so it was held on the steps where she could see it. "No one ever, I believe, has met with such an ovation," she wrote wonderingly in her journal that night, "the cheering was quite deafening."

George V's silver jubilee in May 1935, eight months before he died, was suggested by the government partly as a patriotic display of British unity, a warning to Europe's dictators, and partly with an eye to the forthcoming general election. The gruff old king was greeted, to his surprise, by cheering crowds on his way to the thanksgiving service at St Paul's. "I am beginning to think they must really like me for myself," he murmured, and broadcast his thanks to the nation for

their love on the BBC that evening. There were street parties, free cinema shows for children, pensioners were given

vouchers of half a crown each (one eighth of a pound), and souvenir mugs, stamps and embroidery kits were issued.

A vast array of souvenirs, such as this milk jug, were produced to mark Victoria's 50 years on the throne





"I HAD NO IDEA" The Queen was amazed at the warmth shown by the huge crowds, at a time when the monarchy had supposedly fallen out of favour

from Buckingham Palace to St Paul's were six deep. There was a roaring trade in silver jubilee mugs, commemorative medals, tea towels and even Union Jack underpants. Five hundred million people around the world were said to have watched the celebrations on television.

The Queen, as much surprised as her grandfather had been 42 years earlier, was greeted by enthusiastic crowds, both during her visits all around the country (including Northern Ireland, then at the height of the Troubles) and on her trips to Commonwealth countries as far afield as Fiji and Canada. "I am simply amazed: I had no idea," the Queen was overheard saying repeatedly. One innovation was the walkabout, previously seen only in

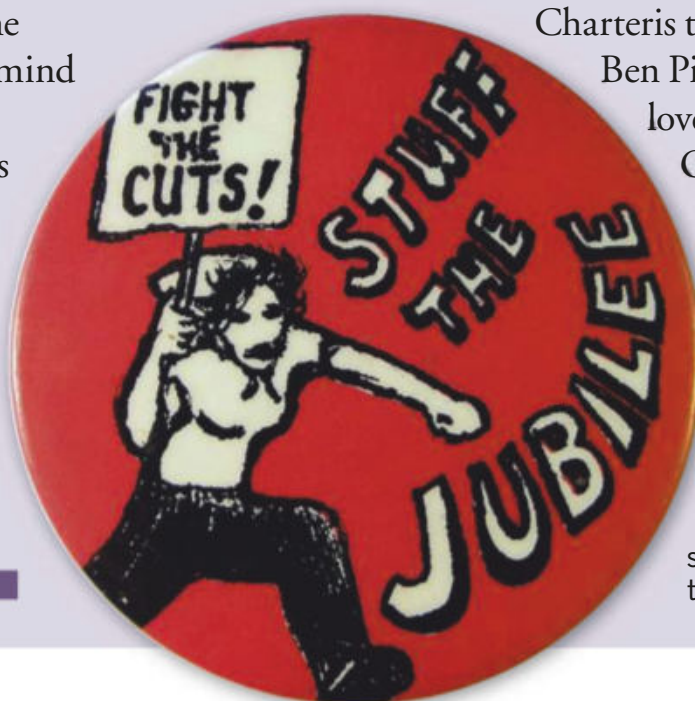
her 1970 New Zealand tour. The informal greeting of people lining the streets was now tried in the City of London following the cathedral service and proved to be such a success that it has been a feature of royal visits ever since.

The only misstep came in the Queen's speech to the combined houses of parliament, when she upset the Scottish Nationalists by insisting: "I cannot forget that I was crowned Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Perhaps the jubilee is a time to remind ourselves of

the benefits which union has conferred." This was the nearest the Queen has ever come to expressing a politically contentious opinion. The poet laureate Sir John Betjeman's celebratory hymn was also possibly a mistake: "From that look of dedication / In those eyes profoundly blue / We know her coronation / As a sacrament and true."

The sceptics were confounded and the silver jubilee set a template for subsequent royal celebrations: a combination of formal, official ceremonies and widespread visits, and informal, local rejoicing.

Charteris told the royal biographer Ben Pimlott later: "She had a love affair with the country". Or as one banner along the processional route had it: "Liz Rules OK".



In a deeply divided Britain of strikes and high unemployment, some angrily opposed the festivities

GETTY IMAGES/DANNY BIRCHALL

Five hundred million people around the world were said to have watched the celebrations on television

Crowds poured into London to watch the spectacle. The monarchy was back on track

2002 The Queen's Golden Jubilee

Rocked by several seismic controversies, the monarchy nonetheless proved its enduring popularity

SHOW OF SUPPORT Considered something of a test of the public's affections, in the event the festivities drew around a million people to The Mall to celebrate

The 50th anniversary of the Queen's reign followed a decade of shocks to the monarchy: the divorces of three of her children, including the highly public and acrimonious split between Prince Charles and Diana, Princess of Wales and her subsequent death in an accident in Paris; and the fire at Windsor Castle, after which it was announced that the Queen wished to pay income tax for the first time. These were events that led to questioning of both the monarchy's popularity and its long-term viability. As before the silver jubilee, there were predictions that the celebrations would be a flop.

The emphasis of organisers at the palace, as one official told the journalist Robert Hardman, was informality: "A lot of effort went into making it look unplanned". The centrepiece was said to be the Queen thanking her people for their support. The year got off to a bad start with

the deaths in rapid succession of Princess Margaret and then the Queen Mother at the age of 101.

The public reaction to the latter's death showed a wide reservoir of respect and affection for the monarchy, as had the celebrations for her centenary two years earlier. The queue to walk past her coffin in Westminster Hall stretched for more than a mile. "As soon as I saw the length of the queue... it spelt to me that the troubles were now passed," a private secretary told Hardman.

Within a month, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were embarking on a tour of the British Isles. Once again enthusiastic crowds turned out, as they would also when the couple visited Jamaica, Australia and New Zealand and Canada.

The centrepiece of the jubilee weekend was another innovation: two concerts, one classical, one pop on a giant stage in the grounds of

Buckingham Palace. There were concerns about the effects on the lawns, and the Queen, by now well into her seventies, did not actually turn up to the pop concert until towards the end. It was a star-studded show however, with performances by Paul McCartney, Eric Clapton and Cliff Richard among others, and was launched with a surprise appearance by Queen guitarist Brian May playing a rock version of the national anthem on top of the palace roof.

The event fitted into the pattern as before: a service at St Paul's, formal lunch at the Guildhall in the City of London, followed by an RAF fly-past over the palace, watched by the Queen and her family from the balcony. An extra day's bank holiday helped prolong the celebrations and there were again street parties across the country and crowds pouring into London to watch the spectacle. The monarchy was back on track.



STANDING FIRM

The Queen and Prince Philip embark for the Jubilee River Pageant, where they stood for hours in torrential rain to watch the seven-mile flotilla pass by

2012

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee

As she reached 60 years on the throne, the Queen rode a wave of public approval

Ten years on and the monarchy had sailed into calmer, more serene waters – though that was not the case for the centrepiece of the commemorations at the start of June. A spectacular regatta procession down the Thames from Putney to the Isle of Dogs was meticulously planned.

It would contain a flotilla of 1,000 boats, barges, cruisers, rowing boats, dinghies and skiffs, but unfortunately the weather grew increasingly squally and wet as the fleet made its way past Westminster. Through it all, the Queen and her nonagenarian husband stoically stood in the open on their barge, watching the procession pass by – a gallant performance which landed the duke in hospital with an infection.

The diamond jubilee was not, like its predecessors, a tentative testing of the public mood towards the monarchy. Its popularity, especially in the wake of the wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton the previous year was not in doubt. But to forestall criticism of the cost at a time of recession, some elements of the celebrations were privately sponsored.

Once again the Queen and Duke toured the British Isles but this time, in a concession to their age, other family members were sent on tours

abroad: Prince Charles and his wife Camilla to Australia, New Zealand and Canada; Prince William and Catherine to Malaysia and the Pacific islands; and Prince Harry to Belize, Brasil, Jamaica and the Bahamas. For the younger members, these tours were partly a testing-the-water exercise, to see how they performed in their royal roles. They were a success.

There were other by-now traditional elements to the jubilee: a St Paul's service, walkabouts, a formal dinner and a concert, though this time, in deference to the palace lawns, it took place at the Victoria Memorial on The Mall.

Many of the stars were the same too, representing performers from each decade of the Queen's reign: Shirley Bassey, Cliff Richard, Tom Jones and Paul McCartney rubbing shoulders with Grace Jones, Robbie Williams, Kylie Minogue, Elton John, Jessie J and Ed Sheeran. As before, the Queen put in a late appearance at the concert.

Overall, the Queen's jubilees have proved an increasingly successful element in promoting the monarchy's popularity: an opportunity for an extra day's holiday for the public, for street parties and uninhibited – though decorous – celebrations.

2017

The Queen's Sapphire Jubilee

The 65th anniversary was just a normal working day

The Queen's 65th anniversary of acceding to the throne passed without fanfare. On 6 February 2017 she spent the day privately at Sandringham, as she does every year, going diligently through the red boxes of official documents sent to her daily by the Government.

The chief reason for the lack of ceremony on the actual anniversary is that the date of her accession is also the day of her father's death and the Queen likes to spend it in quiet reflection. George VI was found dead in bed by his valet in 1952, having suffered a heart attack in his sleep. He had been ill with lung cancer but his death was unexpected, which is why Elizabeth II succeeded to the throne while on a tour in Kenya.

Will there be platinum jubilee celebrations for the 70th anniversary in 2022? Probably only muted ones: by then she will be nearly 96. ■

The date of accession is also the day of her father's death and the Queen likes to spend it in quiet reflection



Secrets of a sovereign's success

*Historian **Andrzej Olechnowicz** reflects on the factors that have secured the Queen, like Victoria before her, such a long and successful reign*

In 2015, Queen Elizabeth II became the longest-reigning monarch in British history and on 6 February 2017, having reigned for 65 years, the first to mark their Sapphire Jubilee. Now in her nineties, she seems to lack neither the physical nor mental powers to continue for some time yet. Comparisons with the previous longest-reigning monarch, Victoria, are inevitable and, in at least four respects, illuminating. To begin with, Victoria saw herself as

the daughter of a soldier and therefore a 'warrior queen', a monarch in whose hands defence and foreign policy rested. By contrast, Elizabeth is the daughter of a reluctant, hesitant king – a man who, before he unexpectedly became king, and substantially after too, looked to the philanthropic side of monarchy. This has also been the core of his daughter's role: even on the cusp of her 10th decade, in 2015 the Queen undertook 341 public engagements, the number only slightly decreasing each year since then, with 283 in 2018.

ALAMY/SHUTTERSTOCK

Secondly, Victoria was politically partisan: she hated Gladstone, everyone knew it, and she plotted to keep him out of government. Had Gladstone not been an ardent monarchist with the patience of a saint, she would have been in trouble. In comparison, Elizabeth has never acted in a partisan way or indeed publicly expressed or endorsed a party or a policy.

Though Walter Bagehot's oft-quoted lines, "the sovereign has, under a constitutional monarchy such as ours, three rights – the right to be consulted, the right to encourage, the right to warn. And a king of great sense and sagacity would want no others," were written during Victoria's reign, it was not true of that queen; but it is of our queen. More than anything, the determination to reign but not to rule reflects the personality of Elizabeth, so far as we know it. Ben Pimlott's biography is perhaps our best guide here: the Queen loves routine and hates the unexpected and, according to an ex-courtier, "accepts what has to be done with so little question... She knows what she's going to do and absolutely accepts it".

Thirdly, for both queens, the burden of monarchy was God-given. Bagehot, again, wrote that "the English monarchy strengthens our government with the strength of religion" because its subjects believed "she rules by 'God's grace'; they believe that they have a mystic obligation to obey her... The monarchy by its religious sanction now confirms all our political order." If it was ever true, it is certainly not now, as the Church of England is no longer as central to British society. However, I suspect that the Queen herself does at some level believe that "she rules by 'God's grace'" and that God in some way shapes human, and therefore royal, lives. Her stoicism, in the face of royal misfortune or royal misconduct, and her faith are closely connected.

Lastly, if according to John Plunkett's book, Victoria was 'the first media monarch', Elizabeth too has had to face the vicissitudes of a press progressively more ready to demonise, trivialise or fawn over royalty. Although her children and grandchildren have succumbed to media demands to tell 'what she is really like', the Queen herself has never given an interview (although in 2018 she had what was described as a "sit down conversation with a BBC presenter" as part of a documentary on the coronation). Until then, only rarely, as in the famous 'annus horribilis' speech – "1992 is not a year

on which I shall look back with undiluted pleasure" – have we caught a glimpse of what she is feeling.

There is perhaps a further similarity between Victoria and Elizabeth: both experienced periods of unpopularity, but emerged to enjoy near-universal public affection. For Elizabeth, the 1990s were a difficult decade; for Victoria, the 1860s potentially even more dangerous – a time when there was a republican movement of some consequence. How Victoria revived her fortunes is a matter for historians, but in the case of Elizabeth we have the invaluable, and somewhat neglected, work of social psychologist Michael Billig. In *Talking of the Royal Family* (1992, reissued 1998), Billig suggested "percentage responses [in opinion polls] provide no sense of people actually thinking about issues, nor of the underlying meanings contained in such thought". Instead, Billig listened to ordinary families discussing the monarchy over several hours in their own living rooms.

Two critical themes emerged. Firstly, the people he spoke

to imagined that without the monarchy 'the nation' and 'the people' would in some way cease. That, more than anything, presents republicanism with a challenge. However, the second thing that these people repeatedly made clear was that the royal family had a job, which was "to set standards, or to give the image of setting standards". People were "not demanding moral perfection" and would excuse ordinary human shortcomings, but royals had to be seen to be making the effort and taking their

'contract of employment' seriously. It was "part of the job" that "they have to behave themselves" – that was why "we pay them". The royals are not like us, *and* like us. And the most powerful sense in which they are like us is in having no choice but to do a job, which they must do competently (as we must) and cannot shirk (as we cannot).


The Queen's upbringing and temperament has ensured that for 66 years she has 'embodied' the nation, and done her job. Not only is that admirable, but it is, according to Billig's research, what we admire. But can we count on this continuing? There was one thing Bagehot got spot on. He thought Britain had been exceptionally lucky in Victoria and Albert, because he considered any heir to the throne could not but be "the man who is most tempted to pleasure, and the least forced to business". In other words, it is most unlikely that we can always be so lucky in those who reign over us. ■

More than anything,
the determination
to reign but not to
rule reflects the
personality of
Queen Elizabeth



Films THE QUEEN *on* SCREEN

For much of the Queen's reign, it would have been unthinkable to portray her private life on screen but in recent years this has changed. **MARK GLANCY** examines three films that strike a balance between revelation and reverence, while on page 98 **TED POWELL** examines the popularity of *The Crown*



The unconventional relationship between the future King George VI and his speech therapist Lionel Logue is the backdrop to this portrayal of the years before Elizabeth II's reign

1 **The King's Speech (Dir: Tom Hooper, 2010)**

With Colin Firth, Geoffrey Rush, Helena Bonham Carter, Guy Pearce

Princess Elizabeth appears in only a few scenes of *The King's Speech*, which is set from 1925 to 1939, but the film portrays events that would frame her life. Certainly one of the key developments of her life was the growth of mass media and the demands that this placed on the monarchy. In a scene set in 1934, George V completes his Christmas Day radio broadcast, and then vents his resentment to his son Albert (the future George VI). "In the past, all a king had to do was look respectable in uniform and not fall off his horse," he fumes, "but now we must invade people's homes and ingratiate ourselves with them." The monarchy had been reduced, as the king puts it, "to those lowest, basest of creatures... we've become actors".

Prince Albert's stammer makes it difficult for him to speak in public, thus rendering him an inadequate actor and a potentially ineffective monarch. The film concerns his attempts to overcome this through a programme of unconventional treatment with the

Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue. The treatment – shouting out of windows, chanting, singing, swearing and jumping up and down – seems as much a course of modernisation as speech therapy. Logue continually urges him to loosen up and express his feelings, and insists on referring to his patient not as 'Your Royal Highness', but by his family nickname, Bertie. He becomes a father figure and one better equipped than George V for preparing Albert for the modern age.

Set against the unfolding abdication crisis, Albert's earnest striving to improve himself is in marked contrast to his elder brother's callous disregard for his duty. The film builds towards

Prince Albert's earnest striving is in marked contrast to his brother's callous disregard for duty

Albert's coronation in 1937 (the first to be filmed) and then his radio address on the first day of war in 1939. In these climactic moments, he fulfils his duties admirably. But there is also a moment of more poignant drama after the accession. When the new king greets his daughters, the young princesses curtsy, and this formality, together with the king's awareness that the 10-year-old Elizabeth is now first in line to the throne, registers as an overwhelming burden rather than a triumph.

But is it accurate?

It is unlikely that Logue's treatment included swearing and other indignities. Also, the speech delivered on the first day of the war was not as pivotal as it is portrayed here. Not quite right too is the portrayal of Churchill as a friend and confidant – at this point he and the royals were divided on issues such as the abdication and appeasement. Nevertheless, *The King's Speech* is a fine royal drama with excellent central performances.



Jarrold's film fictionalises the oft-told tale of the young princesses escaping palace life to join the celebrations at the end of the war

2 A Royal Night Out (Dir: Julian Jarrold, 2015)

With Sarah Gadon, Bel Powley, Emily Watson, Rupert Everett, Jack Reynor

In the final scene of *The King's Speech*, George VI is joined by his family on the palace balcony, where they wave to the cheering crowds below. In fact, there was no celebration of this kind on the first day of war. It was a sombre day – the first of many for nearly six years. It was not until VE Day, on 8 May 1945, that cheering crowds assembled outside the palace and the royal family came out to greet them. This is where *A Royal Night Out* begins.

On this day of celebration, the now teenaged princesses plead with their parents to allow them to join the public party beyond the gates. Reluctantly, the king and queen give their permission but only if they go to a formal party at the Ritz and are chaperoned by two army officers. An adventurous Princess Margaret breaks free of the officers and the

more responsible Princess Elizabeth follows her. With the help of Jack, an AWOL airman, Elizabeth pursues her sister through the mayhem of Trafalgar Square, the sleaze of Soho and all the way to a party at Chelsea Barracks, ultimately finding her sister and returning to the palace at dawn.

Told as a romantic comedy, with Elizabeth sparring with the initially reluctant Jack, the film finds laughs in Elizabeth's seeming inability to cope outside the palace gates. Yet the film also acknowledges her wartime service

The film finds laughs in Elizabeth's seeming inability to cope outside the palace

as a driver and mechanic in the Auxiliary Territorial Service, not least when she confidently drives Jack back to his barracks at breakneck speed. The camera looks away when they finally kiss goodbye and this is typical of the careful tone of the film.

But is it accurate?

Princess Margaret was only 14 on VE Day, so although it is true they went out incognito that night, they were with 16 friends and members of the royal household and got no further than Trafalgar Square. They also returned to the palace by midnight in time to join the king and queen stepping out on the balcony for a final time that night. The character of Jack was of course the film's invention and an effective means of bringing a commoner's perspective to this slight but charming film.



Focusing on the scrutiny of the royal family's behaviour following Diana's death, Frears' film apparently won palace approval

3 **The Queen** (Dir: Stephen Frears, 2006)

With Helen Mirren, Michael Sheen, Sylvia Syms, James Cromwell, Alex Jennings

The death of Princess Diana on 31 August 1997 was a tragedy that highlighted the public's expectations of the monarchy in the modern age. The royal family expected to grieve privately at Balmoral but in the week between her death and her funeral there was an increasing clamour for public involvement in the family's grief. "Show Us You Care," one tabloid headline demanded. *The Queen* tells the story of this remarkable week, drawing a contrast between the family's sense of traditional decorum and the modernising spirit of the newly elected prime minister, Tony Blair. Whereas the prime minister can capture the public mood in a single phrase, paying tribute to Diana as 'the people's princess', the Queen initially sees no need to address or even acknowledge public feeling.

The film portrays this as a clash of generations. The royal family's reserve is represented as stemming

from the privations and austerity of the Second World War, while the prime minister's ease and informality is represented as typical of a post-1960s, media-saturated sensibility.

Remarkably, this clash is dramatised without taking sides. The Queen's reserve initially seems remote but gradually is revealed to stem, at least in part, from her need to protect her grandsons. The prime minister, meanwhile, emerges as a somewhat superficial man, who has not thought through his conflicting beliefs in tradition and modernisation. A sharp script and two fine performances

Mirren's performance captures a figure who has spent her entire life in the public eye

ensure this is a riveting drama. Michael Sheen's Tony Blair is a figure just a little too eager to please, while Helen Mirren's Oscar-winning performance captures a figure who has spent her entire life in the public eye and will remain in the public's affections far longer than the prime minister.

But is it accurate?

The screenwriter Peter Morgan was surprised to find that when Tony Blair wrote his memoir in 2010, he recalled his meeting with the Queen using almost exactly the same dialogue that Morgan had written for the film. It is noteworthy, too, that Helen Mirren was invited to meet the Queen after the film's release – a sign that the film caused no offence and seems to have been regarded as a generally authentic and sympathetic portrayal of one of the most difficult periods of the Queen's reign. ■



The Crown: small screen, big drama

Ted Powell *looks at the accuracy of the Netflix historical series, a lavish royal soap that follows the politics and drama of Elizabeth II's reign amid events that shaped the second half of the 20th century*

The Crown (Creator: Peter Morgan)

With Claire Foy, Matt Smith, John Lithgow, Olivia Colman, Tobias Menzies

Since the release of the first season in 2016, *The Crown* has enjoyed worldwide success. Season one deals with the period from the Queen's marriage to Prince Philip in 1947 until 1955, while season two covers the years 1956 to 1964, from the Suez Crisis to the birth of Prince Edward. The third season, bringing the story of the House of Windsor forward to 1976, is eagerly awaited. But while it makes good television drama, how true is it to historical fact?

Like *The Godfather*, *The Crown* begins with a wedding. The ailing Don (King George VI) is about to marry off his daughter to a young upstart (Prince Philip) eager to muscle in on the Family business. In the next episode, the old Don dies, and the matriarch (Queen Mary) warns the new head of the Family (Queen Elizabeth II) that she must put aside her old life in the name of duty. Like Michael Corleone, she must assume a new identity: Elizabeth Mountbatten has been replaced by Elizabeth Regina. The hard-bitten family consigliere (Winston Churchill)

acknowledges the new Boss by the kissing of hands...

Far-fetched or not (Peter Morgan, writer of *The Crown*, has acknowledged his debt to *The Godfather*), the comparison reminds us that we are dealing with drama, not history. It plays upon our enduring fascination with royalty. What are they like behind closed doors? What price do they pay for the privileged lives they lead? Thoroughly researched, beautifully written and superbly acted, *The Crown*

is nonetheless historical soap opera, not documentary. The concern is that its impact is so powerful that it crowds out the historical record.

Controversy has raged over its historical accuracy. The distinguished royal expert Hugo Vickers has written a lengthy analysis of the series, pointing out numerous factual errors, major and minor. He is particularly critical of the way in which *The Crown* mixes fact and fiction for dramatic effect. In response Robert Lacey, one of the advisers to the series, has vigorously defended its authenticity.

There are a number of imaginary scenes and characters throughout the series: for example in season one an entire episode is devoted to a fictionalised account of the great London smog of 1952, in which one of Churchill's secretaries is knocked down and killed by a bus. In a later episode the Queen hires a (fictional) tutor to fill the supposed gaps in her education. Tabloid rumours about tensions within the royal family are

Actor Tobias Menzies as Prince Philip in *The Crown* season three, expected to air in 2019



Olivia Colman succeeds actor Claire Foy as Queen Elizabeth II in series three of Netflix's royal biopic

NETFLIX-SOPHIE MUTEVELIAN



spun into major story lines. Prince Philip's visit to Australia and the South Pacific in 1956 is made to appear like a five-month stag night, threatening the breakdown of his marriage to the Queen. Likewise the saga of Princess Margaret's love affair with Peter Townsend is seen as causing a bitter feud with her sister.

All dramas need a really sinister villain, and the royal character who comes out worst in *The Crown* is the hapless Duke of Windsor, formerly Edward VIII. Portrayed as the 'wicked uncle' on a par with Richard III, he is condemned during the second season as a Nazi agent, having supposedly schemed with Hitler's high command to depose this brother George VI and return to the throne. Edward did indeed mix with dubious company, but to allege that by leaking information he was somehow responsible for the fall of Paris to the Germans in 1940 really does stretch the bounds of credulity.

The drama in *The Crown* derives from the interplay between the lives of the protagonists and the constraints placed upon them by membership of the House of Windsor. Nearly all the main characters are in some way damaged or thwarted by their royal status. King George is driven to an early grave by his unexpected accession to the throne following the abdication of his brother; Prince Philip seethes with frustrated ambition; Princess Margaret pines for love of a man she cannot marry. Only Queen Elizabeth herself seems untouched, dutifully subordinating her private life

Nearly all the main characters are in some way damaged by their royal status

to her responsibilities as sovereign. Although it tries very hard, in the end *The Crown* fails to make her interesting. The other characters interest us because they are flawed – it is their weaknesses and failures that fascinate us. The Queen on the other hand is flawless. She may have furious rows with her sister, or deliver a dud speech, but she does her duty, and learns from her mistakes.

Paradoxically *The Crown* succeeds most as history when it fails as drama. It may therefore be giving us a true representation of the Queen, showing her not as a soap opera monarch, but as she really is: an ordinary woman in an extraordinary situation, comfortable in her own skin and fulfilling, with utter conviction, the vow that she made on her 21st birthday. "My whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service". ■

Season three of *The Crown* is expected to be released by Netflix in late 2019



A lifetime of CHANGE

For many, the Queen is a symbol of perpetual, old-fashioned stability. Yet, says **DOMINIC SANDBROOK**, since her birth in 1926 she has been part of one of the most remarkable chapters of social transformation in British life

NEW BALL GAME

Between the wars, women began to enjoy social and economic freedoms that would previously have been unimaginable

OPPOSITE PAGE:
Commemorative mug to mark
the 1953 coronation

ALAMY/GETTY IMAGES

Shortly before 3am on 21 April 1926, a little girl was born to Prince Albert, Duke of York and his wife Elizabeth. The new arrival's exhausted mother had been hoping for a girl, while her father could barely contain his joy. "We always wanted a child," Albert wrote afterwards, "to make our happiness complete."

Few could have guessed it at the time, but that little girl would become perhaps the most recognisable British face of the century. In many ways, her life could hardly have been more different from the experiences of most ordinary people. Elizabeth II has never shopped at Asda or at Aldi; never spent a week at Butlin's or at Center Parcs; never filled in a pools coupon or gambled on the Lottery; never worried about her hire-purchase repayments, her mortgage or her pension. She has never known the fear of unemployment or the joy of promotion; never felt the anxiety of the first week at university or the nerves of a first job interview; never been on a demonstration, danced at a rock festival or watched a football match in a pub. She does, however, watch television; her favourite shows down the years reportedly include *Dad's Army*, *Midsomer Murders* and, perhaps a little implausibly, *The Bill*. In this, at least, she is not so different from millions of her fellow Britons.

As Elizabeth II, she has become the living symbol of our nation, from giggling princess to radiant young queen, from anxious mother to beloved grandmother. Indeed, on the surface at least, the Queen has become the incarnation of the eternal, unchanging verities of selflessness, self-discipline and responsibility. To many of her people, she represents stability and continuity, the virtues of the tweed overcoat and the battered Land Rover, the appeal of old-fashioned Christian charity and unashamed moral conservatism; the embodiment not just of our royal family, our national history and our collective traditions, but of Britishness itself.

Yet the irony is that few monarchs have presided over an age of such dramatic and turbulent change, from the disappearance of the British empire and the decline of British

Christianity to the rise of divorce and digital technology. Indeed, the very fact of change is surely a compelling reason why her deliberately old-fashioned image remains so overwhelmingly popular. For to look back across the Queen's life is to gaze across a social and cultural landscape that, superficially at least, has changed utterly. Our clothes, our food, our pleasures, our values, even our holidays and our hobbies: all these things tell a story of astonishing transformation, stretching over more than nine decades.

When Elizabeth was born in April 1926, Britain was only days away from the outbreak of the General Strike. The scars of the First World War were still raw; with unemployment having soared in the immediate aftermath, disabled servicemen could be seen begging on street corners. The prime minister of the day, Stanley Baldwin, was at heart and in outlook something of a Victorian, a Worcestershire industrialist who had anonymously donated around a fifth of his personal fortune to help repay Britain's war debts. And against Baldwin's Conservatives stood a Labour party dominated by trade unionists and manual workers, whose leader, Ramsay MacDonald, was the illegitimate son of a Scottish farm labourer and a housemaid.

Yet although it is tempting to play up the Victorianism of Baldwin's Britain, and the supposed backwardness of the years when little Elizabeth was reportedly "chattering and bombarding the guests with crackers" at Christmas parties, this would, I think, be a mistake. Even in the late 1920s, there were powerful hints of the changes that would dramatically reshape British life and culture during the future Queen's lifetime. For although the twenties and thirties are often remembered as an age of strikes and dole queues, captured in the memorable images of long lines of men in flat caps and grey overcoats, this was only part of the story.

Even as young Elizabeth was playing on her rocking horse, thousands of young women, for example, were cutting their hair shorter, wearing their skirts higher,

Few monarchs have presided over an age of
such dramatic and turbulent change



PRIVILEGE AND PRIVATION

Striking engineers cross Blackfriars Bridge, London; the princess was born just days before the General Strike



GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

CLOISTERED CHILDHOOD Elizabeth in 1930, not yet destined for the throne. At the time, Britain was slumping into the Great Depression, stricken by soaring unemployment

BYGONE BRITAIN The 1930s were the turning point, when Priestley's 'second Britain' of thriving Victorian industry – now well preserved at the Black Country Living Museum – was under threat



smoking, drinking and even driving. And in 1934, when Elizabeth was just seven, the writer JB Priestley memorably suggested that for all the appearance of tradition, England was in the throes of tremendous social change. (Unlike many other writers of the day, he really did mean England, rather than Britain. Even so, his remarks apply equally well to Wales and Scotland.)

There were, Priestley wrote, three versions of England. One was “Old England, the country of the cathedrals and minsters and manor houses and inns, of parson and squire; guide-book and quaint highways and byways England.” This, of course, is the England that millions of tourists visit every year; the England of Oxford and Cambridge, Bath and the Cotswolds; it is also, in essence, the England that Elizabeth II has come above all to represent.

Priestley’s second England, however, has now almost vanished. This was the England of the urban north and Midlands, “the 19th-century England, the industrial England of coal, iron, steel, cotton, wool, railways; of thousands of rows of little houses all alike, sham Gothic churches, square-faced chapels, Town Halls, Mechanics’ Institutes, mills, foundries, warehouses... mill chimneys, slums, fried-fish shops, public-houses with red blinds... good-class draper’s and confectioners’ shops, a cynically devastated countryside, sooty dismal little towns, and still sootier grim fortress-like cities.”

You can, of course, still see the remains of this England, though it is surely telling that it has been best preserved in places like the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley, where dozens of Victorian buildings, from workshops to confectionary stores, have been painstakingly moved and maintained. In the early 1930s, when Priestley was writing, it was threatened by the experience of the Depression.

It enjoyed a last hurrah in the 1950s, when British manufacturers enjoyed a brief but illusory Indian summer as foreign competitors struggled to rebuild from the devastation of the Second World War. Although poverty and deprivation have never gone away, the world of the industrial working class, the world of Methodist chapels and street corner pubs, has largely disappeared.

It was Priestley’s third England, though, that held the key to the immense social changes that broke like a tidal wave over the United Kingdom during Elizabeth II’s lifetime. This was what he called the “new postwar England... the England of arterial and by-pass roads, of filling stations and factories that look like exhibition buildings, of giant cinemas and dance-halls and cafes, bungalows with tiny garages, cocktail bars, Woolworths, motor-coaches, wireless, hiking, factory girls looking like actresses, greyhound racing and dirt tracks, swimming pools, and everything given away for cigarette coupons”. And although some of this seems quaint today – the greyhound tracks and cigarette coupons, for example – there is also much that seems prescient and familiar.

I think Priestley’s third England – a society already being transformed by leisure, affluence and consumerism, especially in those parts of the south and Midlands that had been spared the ravages of the Depression – offered a preview of the changes that would sweep over the nation during the 1950s and 1960s. These changes were delayed, of course, by the onset of the Second World War (during which the young Elizabeth joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service as No 230873 Second Subaltern Elizabeth Windsor) and by the privations of postwar austerity. But, given the transformation of the economy, the rise of consumerism and the expansion of education, they were surely inevitable.

Elizabeth became Queen in 1952, in an age of smog and fog, thick greatcoats, stodgy food and heavy coins; the age of Stanley Matthews and Billy Wright, Vera Lynn and Arthur Askey. Class consciousness hung heavy in the air, yet most people felt tightly connected by their common culture. By contemporary standards, it looks an almost antediluvian world. More than one in four people had outside toilets; fridges and washing machines were expensive luxuries; televisions were almost unknown; and there were just 3 million cars on the roads, compared with more than 38 million vehicles of all kinds today.

Yet this was also a world in flux. After years of greyness, deprivation and austerity, Britain’s new Queen seemed to symbolise a better, brighter future. Commentators talked of a New Elizabethan Age, an age of technological innovation and cultural renaissance. On



Princess Margaret and Captain Peter Townsend – marriage to a divorcee was deemed intolerable

GETTY IMAGES



Coronation Day, 2 June 1953, around 3 million people lined the streets of London, cheering and waving their flags despite the pouring rain. Even more significantly – especially for the long-term future of the monarchy – the sales of new television sets doubled in the month before the coronation. On the big day itself, some 20 million people watched several hours of the BBC’s reverential black and white coverage. Indeed, to most ordinary viewers, it was a national spectacle like no other.

To Elizabeth herself, now a serious, reserved young mother, the coronation was above all a deeply personal even spiritual experience. Yet it was also awash with the kind of consumerism that would come to define our national life in the decades that followed. Sales of flags, banners and memorabilia went through the roof and the day even gave the country a new national dish – Coronation Chicken, an Anglo-Indian mixture invented especially for the palace banquet by the food writer Constance Spry and the chef Rosemary Hume.

Two years later, as the press pored over the love life of the Queen's sister Margaret, who had become involved with the divorced Group Captain Peter Townsend, came

another sign of the new pressures of the mass media and the cult of celebrity, which would only increase as Elizabeth's reign continued. The magic of monarchy had long resided in its paradoxical combination of remoteness and accessibility. But with the birth of television and the emergence of a less deferential media culture, this would become a harder trick to pull off. Indeed, re-reading those gossip columns from 1955, it is hard not to think of what was coming: the divorces of the Queen's children, the Sarah Ferguson saga, the death of Diana and the ensuing media furore.

In the years that followed, the rhetoric of a New Elizabethan age began to look increasingly hollow. Only three years after the coronation, the fiasco of the Suez Crisis laid bare Britain's reduced economic and diplomatic position for all to see. By the 10th anniversary of her accession, much of the empire had already evaporated.

The influx of hundreds of thousands of immigrants from Britain's former colonies transformed the look of our cities, the sound of our music and even the flavours of our

The coronation was awash with the kind of consumerism that would come to define our national life in the decades that followed



KICKING OFF Notting Hill race riots, 1958. Large-scale immigration brought Britain new diversity, but led to hostility against non-whites



LOOKING FORWARD The Notting Hill Carnival reveals how much Britain has changed since the 1950s

foods, but it also exposed an uglier side to our national life, from the young hoodlums who rioted in Notting Hill in 1958 to the skinheads who marched against the Ugandan Asians in 1972.

And although the supposedly Swinging Sixties brought rising living standards, new universities and the liberalisation of the laws governing divorce, abortion and homosexuality, they also brought new anxieties about the competitive decline of Britain's economy and new uncertainties about a post-imperial nation's place in a changing world.

The curious thing is that through all this, Elizabeth herself remained remarkably constant. The tapes of her annual Christmas broadcasts show that her accent gently altered over the years, losing a little of the clipped, glacial rigidity of her first broadcasts. In essence, though, she always played the same part, never deviating from her lines, never faltering, never putting so much as a foot out of place. And the truth is that this explains much of her success. In an age where everything else seemed in flux –

when the currency was being decimalised, when bombs were going off in Northern Ireland, when factories across the land were closing their doors, when the advent of computer technology was transforming the High Street – the Queen represented a reassuring fixed point. Everything else had changed. But Elizabeth, at least, seemed to stay the same.

No wonder, then, that today her popularity remains undimmed. Even a few years ago, few people could have predicted the political turbulence of the 2010s, from the election of the first coalition government since the Second World War and the impact of economic austerity to the vote to leave the European Union in 2016 and the extraordinarily unpredictable general election a year later. Yet it speaks volumes for Elizabeth's reputation that almost uniquely in British public life, she managed to remain above the fray.

The Sun famously claimed that the 'Queen Backs Brexit', but the Palace issued firm denials, and few people would seriously claim that they know the Queen's views on the political controversies of recent years. While the Brexit furore divided political parties, institutions and even

The spectacle of the monarch welcoming descendants of slaves as friends, relatives and equals could scarcely have sent a more powerful message



MAKING HISTORY A black American bishop delivers the sermon at Harry and Meghan's wedding in 2018

families, the Royal Family sailed on regardless. And Elizabeth herself remained as she had always been: unfathomable, imperturbable, the personification of duty, the embodiment of national unity at a time when all else was disagreement and division.

That is not to say, though, that the Queen's life in recent years has been untouched by change. In August 2017, at the age of 96, her husband, Prince Philip, retired from his royal duties, while her own role has quietly but unmistakably passed to her son and heir, Charles. Perhaps most obviously, a younger generation has been allowed to occupy centre stage: first the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, then the Duke and Duchess of Sussex. And this, too, tells a wider story. Formerly Kate Middleton, the Duchess of Cambridge is the daughter of a former flight dispatcher and flight attendant, who ran their own mail-order party supplies business.

As for Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, hers is perhaps the most remarkable story of all. A former Hollywood actress and a divorcee of mixed-race heritage, she would have been an unthinkable addition to the Queen's family in the 1950s, let alone the 1920s. Yet at her wedding in 2018, the Queen sat quite happily through a fire-and-brimstone address by the black American bishop Michael Curry, who quoted from Martin Luther King and African-American spirituals. Not even the most ambitious screenwriter in the former Meghan Markle's native Los Angeles would have come up with such a scenario. And at a time when so many politicians were arguing so fiercely about the implications of Brexit, and when so many commentators were bemoaning what they saw as a new age of intolerance and division, the spectacle of the nonagenarian monarch welcoming the

descendants of slaves as friends, relatives and equals could scarcely have sent a more powerful message.

In some ways, the story of Britain during Elizabeth's lifetime has been one of conspicuous decline. In 1926, the empire was at its height, and the decade saw the beginning of a steady decline in the UK's former economic pre-eminence. Ninety years on the empire is merely a distant and often controversial memory, while Britain has perhaps never been more dependent on its neighbours and its alliances, not just for its energy, but for its military security and economic prosperity.

In other ways, though, life for ordinary people has very clearly improved. Britain in 2019 is a more cosmopolitan, outward-looking country than in 1926, its people benefiting from freedoms and opportunities of which their predecessors could barely dream.

Indeed, nothing sums that up better than perhaps the single biggest social change of the last nine decades, and one that is perfectly symbolised by Elizabeth's own extraordinary prominence as a symbol of her nation – namely, the transformation in the horizons and expectations of Britain's women. Today, when millions of women head out to work every day, we can easily forget how different life was in the 1920s. We rarely think of Elizabeth II as a working mother, since her job is not one to which the rest of us can reasonably aspire and her life often seems almost impossibly remote.

But a working mother, of course, is exactly what she has been. And, in a funny way, perhaps that makes her a surprisingly appropriate symbol of change after all. ■

HEIRS APPARENT

TOP TO BOTTOM
George VI; Elizabeth II;
Prince Charles; Prince
William and Prince George.
Changes to the succession
laws, effected in 2015, gave
daughters of future UK
monarchs equal right to the
throne, which may lead to
more female sovereigns



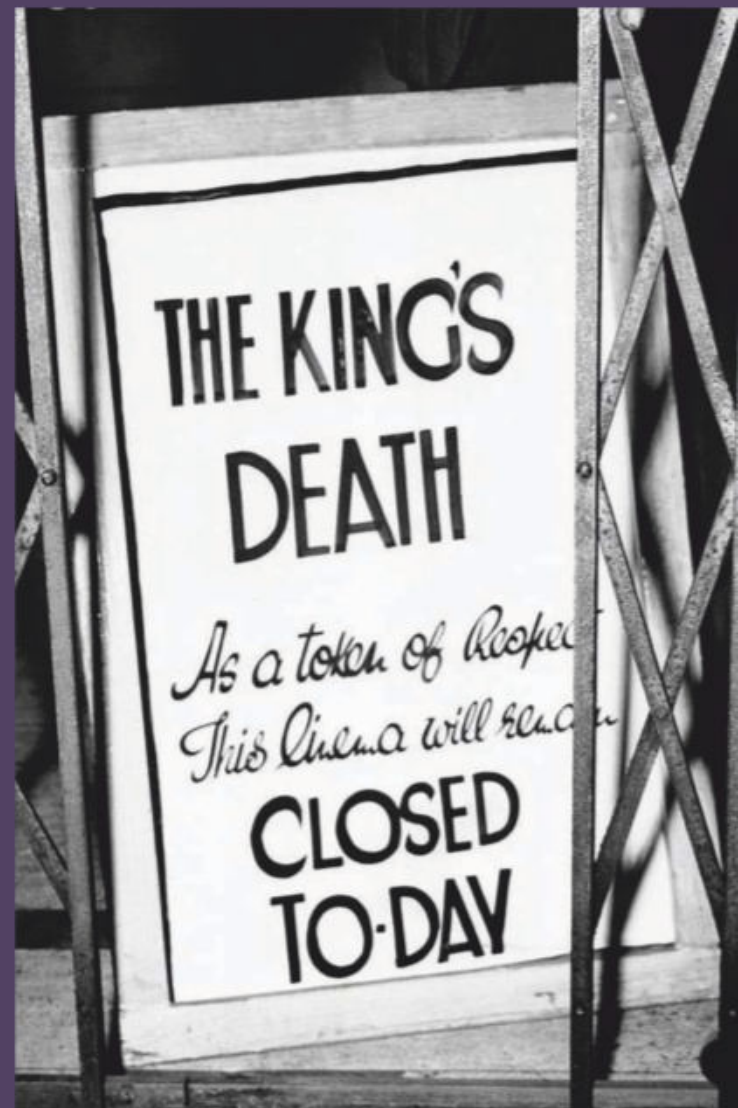
THE CHANGING FACE OF THE MONARCHY

From enjoying distant reverence in the 1930s to a present-day monarch that tweets, the royal family has – sometimes reluctantly – had to change with the times.

STEPHEN BATES looks at how the gradual modernisation of British royalty under Elizabeth II has ensured its continuing popularity



MORALE BOOSTER George VI and Queen Elizabeth (later the Queen Mother) won affection by visiting bomb sites. Buckingham Palace, above, was bombed several times



A NATION MOURNS Profound public shock and grief greeted the news of George VI's death. Film showings, theatre performances, sports fixtures and broadcasts were cancelled

On the morning of 6 February 1952, when the BBC broadcast on the radio that King George VI had died at Sandringham overnight in his sleep, men stopped their cars, got out and stood to attention as a mark of respect.

The septuagenarian prime minister, Winston Churchill, spending the morning in bed with a cigar and working on state papers, burst into tears when Sir Edward Ford, the assistant private secretary at Buckingham Palace, took a taxi round to Downing Street to break the news. Churchill exclaimed: "Bad news? The worst!" There was a sense of genuine national shock.

Despite the fact that the king had been seriously ill with cancer for some time and had undergone an operation to remove his diseased left lung a few months earlier, there had been no public admission that he was ill.

Parliament paid its respects and then adjourned for a fortnight; theatres and cinemas closed and, on the radio, comedy programmes and the daily soap opera *Mrs Dale's Diary* were suspended. There was, after all, just one broadcasting organisation, only half a million households had a television set and the transmission of black and white pictures had only recently spread as far as the Midlands.

Britain 67 years ago was a country almost unimaginably different in outlook, attitudes, morals and ethos than today, to say nothing of technol-

ogy. Opinion polls into the early 1960s showed that just under a third of respondents believed that the Queen had been chosen by God rather than by right of succession from her father.

There was, to be sure, subversive criticism of the monarchy: "I am just absolutely sick of seeing her face on everything from tinned peas upwards," one member of the public told the Mass Observation social

Virtually all other institutions **have declined in esteem** over the last 70 years



WAITING PATIENTLY Although millions famously watched the coronation at home on new-fangled television sets, in London many people slept in the streets along the procession route to guarantee a view of the sovereign travelling to and from Westminster Abbey

research organisation before the Queen's coronation in 1953. But in a much more deferential society even the mildest public criticism was muted. When the journalist and historian John Grigg, himself Baron Altrincham, ventured in a magazine article in 1957 that the Queen sounded like "a priggish schoolgirl, captain of the hockey team", he was assaulted in the street for his temerity by one Philip Kinghorn Burbidge from the League of Empire Loyalists.

A Mass Observation poll conducted in a working-class part of London in May 1953, a month before the coronation, found more than 70 per cent were pleased or very pleased about the event and only 14 per cent were hostile. More than 65 years on, with polling supposedly much more scientific, using a slightly different

question, the approval rating remains astonishingly similar: a YouGov poll in the run up to the royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle in May 2018 found seven in ten Britons supported the country continuing to have a monarchy.

A poll by Com Res for the *Daily Mail* in 2013, just after the birth of Prince George, third in line to the throne, found that three-quarters of respondents believed that he would one day become king and only 9 per cent thought it would not happen because Britain will have become a republic by then, whenever that is.

Such a constant approval rating is all the more remarkable because virtually all other institutions have declined in esteem over the last 70 years. Politicians, clergy, bankers, businessmen and journalists are all

less trusted, admired and deferred to than they were then. This was at a time when the BBC broadcaster Leslie Mitchell could conclude an interview with Sir Anthony Eden, the prime minister, during the 1955 general election campaign with the obsequious words: "May I say thank you very much indeed for letting me question you."

The reasons for the monarchy's popularity in 1952 were clear: King George VI and his family had been the nation's figureheads during the Second World War. If their contribution had been more symbolic than practical, they were credited with sticking with their people and suffering the war's privations like everyone else. The truth was slightly different in that they received extra coupons and could retreat to Windsor

RED BOX DUTY

The Queen makes a point of still dealing with the daily dispatch boxes from government and the Commonwealth



Castle during the Blitz. However, Buckingham Palace had been bombed while the king and queen were in residence and they had certainly raised morale through regular visits and public appearances throughout the war.

There was public sympathy with the young queen for the sudden loss of her father, respect for the institution she was taking on and confidence in her sense of responsibility. She was clearly not frivolous as her uncle Edward VIII had been, or as her younger sister Princess Margaret was. As the *Manchester Guardian* pronounced in its editorial, with courtly and patronising charm, on the day she became Queen, the throne was as secure “in the love of all who acknowledge allegiance to it as it has ever been in history... It is a great inheritance –

and a heavy burden – that now falls to the girl who becomes Queen. All may have confidence that she will wear the crown nobly.”

It is rather difficult to see the same newspaper saying the same next time – its editorial stance has changed somewhat – but through what is now the longest reign in British history, the Queen’s diligence and sense of duty has never wavered and that remains appreciated by the majority of the population. They may not think of her every day, they may not even

particularly admire the institution but she is respected and not even republican organisations are calling for her abdication or removal. As one former Labour cabinet minister told me while I was researching my book *Royalty Inc*: “The institution is working pretty well and there are more important issues to be concerned about... There would have to be a compelling reason to make change a priority. And it would be a terrible vote loser.” Even the current Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, a lifelong republican, felt constrained

The monarchy remains above partisan politics: no one really knows what the Queen thinks about any issues of the day



UNDER FIRE The blaze that tore through Windsor Castle in 1992 focused attention on the running costs of the royal family; the Queen subsequently began paying income tax



VALUE FOR MONEY? Accusations of extravagance have in the past been targeted at royals such as Prince Andrew and his former wife Sarah Ferguson, shown here in 1986

to join the Privy Council of the Queen's formal advisers, though he drew the line at bending the knee when swearing allegiance as he did so.

The Queen's long reign exemplifies many of the lessons the British monarchy has learned, sometimes the hard way, over centuries. Primarily, it has remained above partisan politics: no one really knows what the Queen thinks about any issues of the day, despite periodic attempts to second-guess her views on issues such as the European Union. Her personal life has always been above suspicion: she has maintained the Victorian tradition of family respectability – even though her children (like Victoria's) have not always been models of propriety themselves. Above all, into her 10th decade, she maintains an ostentatious sense of public duty. The red boxes of

government papers are dealt with every day, there is a constant round of meetings with ministers and officials, as well as state visits and several hundred public appearances each year.

Yet the institution has changed almost out of recognition since 1952: an evolution of style to keep pace with a changing society and public expectations that has gone largely unnoticed. In the early years, the Queen did not do walkabouts; she did not travel by public transport as she occasionally does now; divorced people were generally not introduced at court; members of religious groups other than Anglicans had no official role in her coronation; and she certainly did not appear in television documentaries or spoofs such as the James Bond skit at the opening of the London Olympics in 2012.

The protocols remain much the same but the compromises do much to help humanise the monarchy. For the first 15 years of her reign the solitary royal press officer, Commander Richard Colville, was known to the press as the 'abominable no-man' because of his reluctance to divulge any information whatsoever. Now there is a proactive media operation, a royal website and the Queen even supposedly tweets (though actually she has someone to do it for her).

It has not all been smooth sailing. The 1990s, with the highly public break-ups of her children's marriages, the fire at Windsor Castle and the death of Princess Diana was a rocky period. It produced a greater openness about



FUTURE-PROOFED The younger generation of royals has proven particularly popular in recent years. A YouGov ratings survey (May–October 2018) found 77 per cent of people said they liked Prince Harry, with the Queen and Prince William almost as popular. This official family photograph was taken to mark Prince Charles's 70th birthday in November 2018

the royal finances – still not entirely transparent – and the acceptance of paying tax on her personal income, something her predecessors had fought against for 80 years.

At the same time, palace reforms instituted a more professional, less wasteful, operation. There are now annual reports on the costs of the monarchy and its official duties, including travel – all designed self-consciously to prove value for money.

In 2016–17, the cost of the institution was £42.8m (for 2017–18 it was £76m, an exceptional increase for refurbishing Buckingham Palace).

The annual profit from the historic crown estates, accrued by monarchs over the centuries (139,000 hectares, including chunks of central London, Ascot racecourse, business and retail parks across the country, more than half the UK coastline and estates

from the highlands to Somerset) goes to the government: £329.4m in 2018. In return the Treasury dispenses 15 per cent of Crown Estates profits to the monarch to meet the costs of royal duties.

Despite accusations of extravagance, mainly directed at offspring such as Prince Andrew rather than the Queen herself, there is little sign of public disquiet as a result of knowing more about the costs of royalty. Republicans argue that the figure is underestimated because it does not include security, though presumably any alternative head of state would also need protection.

The Queen's private wealth, from investments and the profits from the historic 18,454 hectares of the Duchy of Lancaster estates – £20.2m after tax in 2018 – contribute to an estimated net private worth of about

£370m, which only placed her 344th in the 2018 *Sunday Times* list of the richest people in Britain.

Now in her nineties, the Queen is almost certainly the most photographed and celebrated woman on the planet, as she has been for the last 70-odd years. She is an immediately recognisable symbol of Britain throughout the rest of the world, as she is through the Commonwealth and the 16 countries of which she is also queen.

The House of Windsor's succession is secured – all being well – for three further generations, stretching quite probably into the next century if her great-grandson lives as long as she has. That is so long as her heirs, the future Charles III, William V and George VII follow her diligent example and do not compromise the reputation of the monarchy. ■

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Cover picture: Queen Elizabeth II photographed in 1952 by Dorothy Wilding, Camera Press.
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